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SELECT SENTENCES;

OR,

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FROM

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TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

MASON'S

SELECT REMAINS.

Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock. *Song* i. 8.
Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. *Heb.* vi. 12.

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SHORT SAYINGS, *or* SENTENCES, *have been found to be such an easy and successful method of diffusing truth, and communicating instruction, that they have been adopted in almost every age and every country.*

Some of the passages in this volume were selected by TOPLADY, *others by* STRATTON, *and the rest by the* Editor.—*Though there are many passages equally excellent in the same authors; these, when read, made a deep impression; and it was presumed, were calculated to make similar impressions on others.—They are not arranged under distinct heads; but, it is hoped, that, in some degree, like the source from which they are drawn, scarcely a page can be opened, which will not be found "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for "correction, for instruction in righteousness," and for consolation.*

As from samples people have often possessed themselves of valuable articles; so quotations have introduced many to an intimate acquaintance with eminent authors; and should this volume have that happy effect, one good end will be gained.

MASON'S REMAINS *are well known and their value has been duly appreciated.*

SELECT SENTENCES,

&c.

IN the worst of times there is still more cause to complain of an evil heart, than of an evil and corrupt world. *Fleming.*

Bold sinning doth afterwards make faint believing. *ibid.*

None are more ready to shrink in a day of trouble, than such who at a distance seem most daring. *ibid.*

Places or conditions are happy or miserable, as God vouchsafeth his gracious presence more or less. *Sibs.*

God draweth straight lines, but we think and call them crooked. *Rutherfoord.*

What unthankfulness is it to forget our consolations, and to look only upon matter of grievance; to think so much upon two or three crosses as to forget an hundred blessings! *Sibs.*

A good man suffers evil and doth good. A natural man suffers good and doth evil. *ibid.*

A godly man's comforts and grievances are hid from the world. Natural men are strangers to them. *ibid.*

If there were no enemy in the world, nor devil in hell, we carry that within us, that, if let loose, will trouble us more than all the world beside. *ibid.*

Nothing can be very ill with us when all is well within: we are not hurt till our souls are hurt. If the soul itself be out of tune, outward things will do us no more good than a fair shoe to a gouty foot. *ibid.*

What we are afraid to do before men, we should be *afraid to think* before God.

False fears bring true vexations; the imaginary grievances of our lives are more than the real. *ibid.*

He that hath slight thoughts of sin, never had great thoughts of God. *Owen.*

Riches and abundance of the earth loads more than it fills; and men's wealth only heightens their wants. The great man oftener wants a stomach and rest, than the poor man wants meat and a bed to lie on. *Fleming.*

Out of God there is nothing fit for the soul to stay itself upon. *Sibs.*

He wants no company, who hath Christ for his companion *ibid.*

Labour to keep out sin, and then let come what will come. *ibid.*

Trust God and be doing, and let him alone with the rest. *ibid.*

The depths of misery are never beyond the depths of mercy. *ibid.*

To be morose, implacable, inexorable, and revengeful, is one of the greatest degeneracies of human nature. *Owen.*

He that would be little in temptation, let him be much in prayer. *ibid.*

When a child of God wants peace, he can have no peace till God speaks it. *Goodwin.*

So far as any are under the power of sin, they are under the power of madness. *Owen.*

In all worldly joys there is a secret wound *ibid.*

A true believing soul cannot but be a praising soul. *Sibs.*

In all favours, think not of them so much as God's mercy and love in Christ, which sweetens them. *ibid.*

God will be our God so long as he is Christ's God, and because he is Christ's God. *ibid.*

The whole world cannot weigh against this one comfort, that God is our's. *ibid.*

The grossest defilements of sin can noways stain re*ligion and the ways* of the Lord. Fleming.

All our rest in this world is from trust in God. Owen

It is our safest course in every affliction, to lodge the adequate cause of it in our own deserts. *ibid.*

Abound in actings of faith, and we shall thrive in holiness. *ibid.*

He that loves God sincerely will be like him. *ibid*

True faith is humble, and seeth no way to escape but only in Christ. *Rutherfoord.*

Grace withereth without adversity. *ibid.*

Faith makes us draw all our comforts from a fountain that will never fail. *Halyburton.*

Ignorance of God and ourselves is the great principle and cause of all our disquietments. *Owen.*

A man can be in no condition wherein God is at a loss, and cannot help him. If comforts be wanting, he can create comforts, not only out of nothing, but out of discomforts. *Sibs.*

No man dare ask of God so much as he is ready and willing to give. *Luther.*

When we are most ready to perish, then is God most ready to help. *ibid.*

It is a matter of faith not to trust to that which the eye seeth, but that which the word promiseth. *ibid.*

Seek to be pardoned; but above all seek to be beloved. *Goodwin.*

They only are wise, who are wise to salvation. *ibid.*

Nothing but the death of Christ for us, will be the death of sin in us. *Owen.*

It is the glory of a Christian not to be faint-hearted under trials. *Dorney.*

He who prays as he ought, will endeavour to live as he prays. He that can live in sin, and abide in the ordinary duties of prayer, never prays as he ought. A truly gracious praying frame is utterly inconsistent with the love of or reserve for any sin. *Owen.*

The least grace is a better security for heaven than the greatest gifts or privileges whatever. *ibid.*

It is not the outward profession of the truth, but the inward power of it, that is useful unto the world or the souls of men. *ibid.*

Let all seen enjoyments lead you to the unseen Fountain whence they flow *Halyburton.*

If once we are sure God hath done a thing, there is no room left to dispute its equity. *ibid.*

We are never engaged to love till the Lord's kindness draw us. *ibid.*

Men are out of their right minds till they come by faith and repentance to Christ Jesus. *Bain.*

It is a sign some beam of heavenly wisdom hath shined into that soul, which findeth itself empty of true saving wisdom. *ibid.*

Unreasonable fears are the sins of our hearts as truly as they are thorns in our sides; they grieve the Holy Spirit. *Burgess.*

The field which hath millions of weeds in it is a cornfield for all that. *ibid.*

He that exclaims, I am dead, expresseth a conceit he refuteth. *ibid.*

One rose upon a bush, though but a little one, and though not yet blown, proves that which bears it to be a true rose tree. *Burgess.*

As soon shall heavenly joy enter hell, as a presumptuous sinner's heart. *ibid.*

A godly man best knows what true and solid pleasure is. *Fleming.*

How sweet is his smile in whose countenance heaven lieth! *ibid.*

They who are not some way or other under the power of a design to be like unto God, are every way like the devil. *Owen.*

If prayer do not constantly endeavour the ruin of sin, sin will ruin prayer. To live in sin and yet to believe the forgiveness of sin is utterly impossible. *ibid.*

A constant design after the not being of sin is a blessed evidence of a saving faith. *ibid.*

Sin may entangle the mind and disorder the affections, and yet not be prevalent; but when it hath laid *hold on the will it hath* the mastery. ibid.

He that hath tasted the bitterness of sin will fear to

commit it, and he that hath felt the sweetness of mercy will fear to offend it. *Charnock.*

The guilt of one sin is a greater misery than the burden of a thousand crosses. *ibid.*

We cannot begin to lead a holy life till we first look to Christ for pardon of sin. *Cole.*

Repentance is the greatest honour next to innocence. *ibid.*

The comfort of a Christian lieth not in his own fulness, but in Christ's. *ibid.*

He that lives in sin and expects happiness hereafter, is like him that soweth cockle and thinks to fill his barn with wheat or barley. *Bunyan.*

One leak will sink a ship, and one sin will destroy a sinner. *ibid.*

A sense of God's presence in love is sufficient to rebuke all anxiety and fears in the worst and most dreadful condition. *Owen.*

One minute sooner than God's time would not be his people's mercy. *Fleming.*

Better to be a lost sheep than a goat or swine. *Marshal.*

He that thinks to draw saving graces out of natural principles, but spins out his bowels to die in his own web. *Cole.*

A believer's heel may be bruised but his vital parts are out of reach. *ibid.*

He that believeth the gospel with hearty love and liking, as the most excellent truth, will certainly with the like heartiness believe on Christ for his salvation. *Marshal.*

Praying only for carnal things, shews a carnal heart, and leaves it carnal. *ibid.*

It is in vain for God to put off the soul that seeks Him, his kingdom, his righteousness, with lesser things: He knows that cannot be. *Cole.*

To put on the name of Christ, and not to walk in the ways of Christ, what is it else than to prevaricate with the divine name? Cyprian

It is a fallacy of Satan's, to argue, from the sinfulness of our duties, to the non-acceptance of them. "Will God," says he, "take such broken groats at thy hand? Is he not an holy God?"—Learn here, to distinguish. There is a twofold acceptance. 1. A thing may be accepted, as a payment of a debt; or, 2. As a proof of love.—God, who will not accept of broken money, in a way of payment; will, nevertheless, kindly accept of it, from his friends, as a testimony of gratitude.

It is true, O Christian, the debt thou owest to God must be paid in good and lawful money: but here, for thy comfort, Christ, and Christ only, is thy pay-master. Send Satan to him; bid him bring his charge against Christ, who is ready at God's right hand to produce a clear account, and shew his receipt in full for the whole debt.—As to thy performances and obedience, they fall under a quite contrary class; as mere tokens of thy love and thankfulness to God. And, so gracious is thy heavenly Father, that he accepts thy bent sixpence, and will not throw away thy crooked, broken mite. Love refuses nothing that love sends. *Gurnall.*

Industry on our parts is not superseded by the greatness and freeness of God's grace. As, when a school-master teaches a boy gratis, the youth cannot attain to learning, without some application of his own; and yet it doth not therefore cease to be free, on the teacher's part, because attention is required from the learner; so it is here. *Arrowsmith.*

Sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions. *Dodd.*

There is no affliction so small, but we should sink under it, if God upheld us not: and there is no sin so great, but we should commit it, if God restrained us not. *ibid.*

A good old Scotch minister used to say, to any of his flock, when they were labouring under affliction, "Time is short: and, if your cross is heavy, you have not far *to carry it.*"

When the grace of an afflicted saint is in exercise, *heart is like a* garden of roses, or a well of rose-water

which, the more moved and agitated they are, the sweeter is the fragrance they exhale. *Anon.*

As no temporal blessing is good enough to be a sign of eternal election; so no temporal affliction is bad enough to be an evidence of reprobation: for the dearest Son of God's love was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. *Arrowsmith.*

Afflictions scour us of our rust. Adversity, like winter weather, is of use to kill those vermin, which the summer of prosperity is apt to produce and nourish. *ibid.*

Every vessel of mercy must be scoured, in order to brightness. And however trees in the wilderness may grow without culture; trees in the garden must be pruned, to be made fruitful: and corn-fields must be broken up, when barren heaths are left untouched. *ibid.*

The church below is often in a suffering state. Christ himself was a man of sorrows; nor should his bride be a wife of pleasures. *ibid.*

God may cast thee down, but he will not cast thee off. *Case.*

Afflictions are blessings to us, when we can bless God for afflictions. *Dyer.*

Christian, hath not God taught thee, by his word and spirit, how to read the short-hand of his providence? Dost thou not know that the saint's afflictions stand for blessings? *Gurnall.*

Those whom God loves, he takes to pieces; and then puts them together again. *Anon.*

Through Christ's satisfaction for sin, the very nature of affliction is changed, with regard to believers. As death, which was, at first, the wages of sin, is now become a bed of rest (they shall rest upon their beds, saith the prophet); so afflictions are not the rod of God's anger, but the gentle physic of a tender Father. *Crisp.*

If we have the kingdom at last, it is no great matter what we *suffer by* the way. Manton.

Nothing can reconcile the soul to afflictive allotments, *but looking on* them as covenant-dispensations. Mason

All the afflictions, that a saint is exercised with, are neither too numerous, nor too sharp. A great deal of rust requires a rough file. *Browne.*

David's pen never wrote more sweetly, than when dipt in the ink of affliction. *Mason.*

When you see the refiner cast his gold into the furnace, do you think he is angry with the gold, and means to cast it away? No. He sits as a refiner. He stands warily over the fire, and over the gold, and looks to it, that not one grain be lost. And, when the dross is severed, he will out with it presently; it shall be no longer there. *Crisp.*

Crosses and afflictions are God's call to examine our hearts and our lives. *Richardson.*

No affliction would trouble a child of God, if he but knew God's reason for sending it. *ibid.*

Afflictions are as needful for our souls, as food is for our bodies. *ibid.*

The Lord's wise love feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with wants and desertions. *Rutherfoord.*

It is a good sign, when the Lord blows off the blossoms of our forward hopes in this life, and lops the branches of our worldly joys to the very root, on purpose that they should not thrive. Lord, spoil my fool's heaven in this life, that I may be saved for ever! *ibid.*

Arminians represent the universe as the governess of God, instead of representing God as the governor of the universe. *Hill.*

The Pelagians and Arminians are for making nature find its legs. They persuade man, that he can go alone to Christ; or, at least, with a little external help, of an hand to lead, or an argument to excite, without any creating work in the soul. Alas, for the blindness of nature! How false is all this stuff, and yet how glibly it goes down! *Gurnall.*

Assurance of pardon is a free gift of God, as much as faith, or pardon itself. *Arrowsmith.*

Nothing more enflames a Christian's love to God, *than a firm belief of* his personal election from eternity;

after he hath been enabled to evidence the writing of his name in heaven, by the experience of an heavenly calling and of an heavenly conversation. When the spirit of God (whose proper work it is to assure, as it was the Father's to elect, and the Son's to redeem) hath written the law of life in a Christian's heart, and caused him to know assuredly that his name is in the book of life; he cannot but melt in sweet flames of holy affection. *ibid.*

The loadstone draws all the iron and steel that comes near it, and also communicates of its own virtue to the iron it draws. Such a loadstone is Christ. He draws many after him, and when he has drawn them, communicates his own virtue to them; so that they become useful to others: as a magnetic needle attracts other needles, by virtue of the power itself has received.

When true grace is under the foot of a temptation, it will, even then, stir up a vehement desire of revenge, like a prisoner in the enemy's hand, who is thinking and plotting how to get out; waiting and longing, every moment, for an opportunity of deliverance, that he may again take up arms. "O God, remember me," saith Sampson, "this once, I pray thee; and strengthen me, that I may be avenged on the Philistines, for my two eyes," Judges xvi. 27. Thus prays the gracious soul, that God would spare him and strengthen him, that he may be avenged for his pride, unbelief, and all those sins, by which he has dishonoured God. *Gurnall.*

There goes a rumour, that I am to be banished. And let it come, if God so will. The other side of the sea is my Father's ground as well as this side. *Rutherfoord.*

The weakest believer shall partake of such hidden things, such excellencies of Christ, as all the world shall never be able to dive into, reach, nor comprehend. *Crisp.*

A believer, in a poor condition, resembles a fine and valuable picture in a broken frame. *Jenkin.*

Men are believers, because they are elected; not *elected because* they are believers. Sladen

I am like a child that hath a golden book, and plays

chiefly with the ribbons, and the gilding, and the picture in the first page; instead of reading the more profitable contents. *Rutherfoord.*

To believe the gospel, is but to give God credit for being wiser than ourselves. *Madan.*

Believing is the most wonderful thing in the world. Put any thing of thy own to it, and thou spoilest it. *Wilcox.*

God is not only the rewarder, but is himself the reward, of his saints. A king may enrich his subjects with gratuities; but he bestows himself upon his queen. *Cripplegate.*

When a believer is in a state of comfort and prosperity, he can read other books beside the Bible: but, when he is in temptation, or burdened with distress, he betakes himself to the Bible alone. He wants pure wine, without any mixture of water.—This shews the worth of the Bible above all other books. *Serle.*

When you experience, on your soul, the happy energy of the Scriptures; every attempt to stagger your belief, or withdraw your veneration from the Bible, will be like an attempt to shatter the rock in pieces with a bubble, or to pierce the adamant with a feather. *Hervey.*

The pages of Scripture, like the productions of nature, will not only endure the test, but improve upon the trial. The application of the microscope to the one, and a repeated meditation on the other, are sure to display new beauties, and present us with higher attractives. *ibid.*

Without the powerful agency of the blessed spirit, to enlighten our understandings, and to apply the doctrines of the Bible to our hearts; we shall be, even with the word of light and life in our hands, somewhat like blind Bartimæus, sitting amidst the beams of day; or, like the withered arm, with invaluable treasures before it. *ibid.*

By the blessed influences of God's holy spirit, our *understandings are* opened to know, and our hearts ope-

ned to receive, the Scriptures: to understand them, in all the fullness of their heavenly meaning; to receive them, in all the force of their transforming power. *ibid.*

Do all, suffer all, expect all, as being in Christ, and not otherwise. *Cole.*

Men left to their own wills, will rather go to hell than be beholden to free grace for salvation. *ibid.*

He is wise enough who hath learned the gospel: he is altogether out of his senses who seeks saving knowledge any where else; for here are all treasures. *Davenant.*

From all past ages, before time began to flow, God hath decreed to confer the grace of salvation by Christ upon us. *Calvin.*

In the name of Jesus the whole gospel lies hid: this name is the light, food, and medicine of the soul. *Glassius.*

Lowliness of mind is not a flower that grows in the field of nature, but is planted by the finger of God in a renewed heart, and learned of the lowly Jesus. *Boston.*

Grace makes a heart-memory, even where there is no good head-memory. *ibid.*

In vain do men pretend to religion while ungodly company is their choice. *ibid.*

It is safer to be humble with one talent, than proud with ten, yea better to be a humble worm than a proud angel. *Flavel.*

He that is contented with just grace enough to get to heaven and escape hell, and desires no more, may be sure he hath none at all, and is far from being made partaker of the divine nature. *Janeway.*

All our present glory consists in our preparation for future glory. *Owen.*

God is faithful, who hath made himself a debtor to us, not by receiving any thing at our hands, but by promising all *things* to us. *Augustine.*

Sin's joys are but night dreams, thoughts, imaginations, and shadows. *Rutherfoor*

He is no Christian that believes not that faith in the person of Christ is the spring of all evangelical obedience. *Owen.*

Live not so much upon the comforts of God as upon the God of comforts. *Mason.*

Poor worldlings! what will ye do when the span-length of your forenoon's laughter is ended, and when the weeping side of providence is turned to you? *Rutherfoord.*

Old age, and waxing old as a garment, is written on the fairest face of the creation. *ibid.*

What misery to have both a bad way all the day, and no hopes of lodging at night. *ibid.*

Having gotten Christ, it is not possible to keep him peaceably, except the devil were dead. *ibid.*

If there were no other argument for the corruption of our nature, the cold and indifferent way that we praise God for Christ is a demonstration of it. *M'Laurin.*

He is no true believer to whom sin is not the greatest burden, sorrow, and trouble. *Owen.*

He that loves Jesus Christ most, is most like unto God. *ibid.*

A may-be of mercy is a sufficient ground for our reliance, and support of the soul upon God. *Bridge.*

He is too covetous whom God cannot suffice: he hath all things that hath him that hath all things. *ibid.*

Such as know God's glorious holiness, and their own sorry righteousness, will despair of themselves, and never venture with their briars and thorns upon a consuming fire. *Jenks.*

Faith takes hold on something that is material, and makes the soul triumph in hope. *Cole.*

Internal conformity unto the habitual grace and holiness of Christ is the fundamental design of a Christian life. *Owen.*

A godlike man is the only godly man; a christlike nature brought into the soul doth only denominate a man a true Christian. *Shaw.*

An atheist that denies the being of God, doth not so much affront him as a natural man that owns his being, but walks as if there was no God, as if he were not a just and righteous God. *Charnock.*

God's word only is our true religion, as the divine rule; but our confession, books, words, and lives, show how we understand it. *Cole.*

It is not perhaps so heinous an idolatry to set up a graven image, a senseless or a sinless stock or stone, as for a man to set up his own sinful, corrupt affections, and devote himself to a compliance with them in opposition to the righteous will of God. *Charnock.*

A real inclination of soul to seek after the precepts of God, to do and to walk after them, is an infallible sign of a child of God. *Cole.*

Sin not only debaseth the soul, but defiles it also; and indeed there is nothing else that can defile it. For the soul is a most pure beam, bearing the image of the Father of lights; as far surpassing the sun in pureness as the sun doth a clod of earth; and yet all the dirt in the world cannot defile the sun; all the clouds that seek to muffle it, it scatters them all: but sin hath defiled the soul; yea, one sin, the least, defiles it in an instant, totally, eternally. *Goodwin.*

By the death of Christ we are greatly stirred up, both to a caution against, and a detestation of sin: for that must needs be deadly which could be healed no other way than by the death of Christ. Who, therefore, seriously considering that his sins could be no other ways expiated than by the death of the son of God himself, would not tremble to tread as it were his most precious blood under foot by daily sinning! *Davenant.*

Who is there that considereth aright the vanity, darkness, and ignorance of his mind, the perverseness and stubbornness of his will, with the disorder, irregularity, and distemper of his affections, with respect unto things *spiritual and heavenly*, who is not ashamed of, who *doth not abhor himself*? This is that which hath given *our nature its leprosy*, and defiled it throughout. As

he who hath no experience of spiritual shame and self-abhorrency on account of this inconformity of his nature, and the faculties of his soul, unto the holiness of God, is a great stranger to the whole work of sanctification. Who is there that can recount the unsteadiness of his mind in holy meditation, his low and unbecoming conceptions of God's excellencies, his proneness to foolish imaginations and vanities that profit not, his aversation to spirituality in duty and fixedness in communion with God, his proneness to things sensual and evil, all arising from the spiritual irregularity of our natural faculties; but if ever he had any due apprehensions of divine purity and holiness, that is not sensible of his own vileness and baseness, and is not oftentimes deeply affected with shame thereon? *Owen.*

Sinful man is not only blind, but is in love with his blindness; he boasts that he sees when he is most of all blind, and with all his might resists that true light, which by the works of divine providence, by the word of God, and some sparkling beams of the Spirit, most kindly offers itself. *Witsius.*

The Son of God bearing the punishment of the sins of the elect and believers in our nature, declares the sinfulness of sin more than the torments of hell will, where wicked men and angels shall suffer the punishment of their own sins to all eternity. And sinners going to Christ for their justification, sanctification, and salvation, by his righteousness and Spirit, includes an acknowledgment, 1. that they deserve damnation; 2. that of all creatures, except devils, they are farthest from the kingdom of heaven. *Glascock.*

There is no greater discovery of the depravation of our natures by sin, and degeneracy of our wills from their original rectitude, than that, whereas we are so prone to the love of other things, and therein do seek for satisfaction to our souls, where it is not to be obtained, *it is so hard* and difficult to raise our souls unto the *love of God.* Were it not for that depravation, he *would always appear* as the only suitable and satisfactory *object unto* our souls and affections. Owen.

Who is there that hath a serious reverence of God, with any due apprehensions of his holiness, and a clear conviction of the evil nature of sin, who is not able to call over such actings in childhood (which most think meet to connive at) wherein they may remember that perversity whereof they are now ashamed? *ibid.*

Men's sins are innumerable, yet they are but cyphers to the vast sums of grace which are every day expended; because they are finite, but mercy is infinite. *Charnock.*

What should a sinner do, but go to Christ? what can become of a sinner if Christ receive him not? yea, what is a Saviour of sinners for, but for receiving sinners and saving them from their sins? and yet sinners coming unto Christ, and Christ's welcoming of them, makes unbelievers murmur both against Christ and believers. So sure it is that no man can see any glory in that grace of Christ that he hath no sight or sense of his own need of. *Trail.*

Every believer's experience witnesseth to this, that every one that believes on Jesus Christ, acts that faith as the chief of sinners: every man that seeth himself rightly thinks so of himself, and therein thinks not amiss. God only knows who is truly the greatest sinner, and every humble sinner will think he is the man. *ibid.*

There are no saving views of God but in Christ, and there are no gracious views God hath of men but in Christ. If we look on God out of Christ, we are dazzled with an overwhelming, confounding majesty; if God look on us out of Christ, he seeth hateful and hated sinners. *ibid.*

Well may we wonder that the great God should stoop so low, to enter into such a covenant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinful dust and ashes as we are. This is the wonderment of angels, a torment of devils, and the glory of our nature and persons, and will be matter of admiration and praising God to for all eternity.

The Lord Jesus Christ is such a Saviour as became the grace, mercy, love, wisdom, holiness, righteousness, justice, and power of God to provide; and, on the other hand, such a Saviour as became sinners' needs and desires, and therefore deserves their acceptance, as fit, suitable, sufficient to save all that come to God through him, and that even to the utmost; his blood being able to cleanse from all sin, his power being able to subdue all things to himself, and his Spirit sufficient to lead into all truth. *Halyburton.*

O how marvellous a contrivance is there where the blessed majesty of God finds an argument in himself, when man had none wherewithal to plead! the Son was found in the form of a servant, and became our nearest kinsman to redeem the inheritance, where his people's standing is ensured by another surety and strength than their own; not on their apprehending, but their being apprehended; where the Lord does oblige himself by bond to make that good which is only of grace, and is most freely given; where he both frames the desire within the soul and satisfies it. *Fleming.*

All my hope, as to freedom from that darkness which is my burden, is from Christ's prophetical office, and my hope of freedom from the guilt, pollution, and power of sin, and acceptation with God, arises from his kingly and priestly offices. In one word, I have no hopes of any mercy, in time or eternity, but only through him: it is through him I expect all, from the least drop of water to the immense riches of glory. *Halyburton.*

The fountain of mercy is God's love to us from eternity, which inclined to us when we were hateful; when he had determined to manifest this love to us, then according to mercy he saved us. Grace and mercy, and his giving Christ, all is from hence. He so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, &c. *Bain.*

Free grace is God's darling, which he loves to advance; *and it is never* more advanced than when it *beautifies the most* misshapen souls. Charnock.

Two things may quiet any man's conscience under the greatest guilt. 1. Is there not a sufficient sacrifice? is there not satisfaction and atonement in the blood of Christ? is not this a sufficient sacrifice? 2. Is it not thine? This I know unbelief is apt to stagger at: but therefore do but lay thy hand upon the head of the Sacrifice, confess thy sins over the head of thy Burnt-offering, lay thy burdens upon him by faith, and he is thine, and all that he hath done and suffered was for thee, and shall be as effectual for thy good, as available and effectual with the Lord for thee, as if thou thyself hadst suffered, yea, infinitely more. *Mather.*

If Satan lay to my charge; Altho' in Christ Jesus thou hast satisfied the punishment which thy sins have deserved, and hast put on his righteousness by faith, yet thou canst not deny but thy nature is corrupt, so that thou art prone to all evil, and thou hast in thee the seeds of all vices: Against this temptation this answer is sufficient, That by the goodness of God, not only perfect righteousness, but even the holiness of Christ also, is imputed and given unto me, as if I had neither committed any sin, neither were there any blot or corruption cleaving to me. *Bastingius.*

Question. How art thou righteous before God?

Answer. By faith alone in Jesus Christ; so that although my own conscience do accuse me that I have grievously offended against all the commandments of God, and have not kept any one of them, moreover also that I am prone to all evil, yet notwithstanding (so that I embrace these benefits with true affiance of mind) without any merit of my own, of the mere mercy of God, the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is imputed and given unto me as if I never had committed any sin, neither were there any blot or corruption cleaving unto me: yea, as if I myself had perfectly performed that obedience which Christ hath performed for me. Catechism.

The truth is, the satisfaction of Christ is the foundation of pardon; this satisfaction lies in the expiat

sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross: hence expiation or atonement is joined with pardon in scripture. The priest was to make atonement that the sin might be forgiven. An expiatory sacrifice led the way to forgiveness under the law. And so it does now under the gospel. Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins: If you have not the blood of Christ in your eye when you go to God for pardon, never think to speed. *Cole.*

The law admits of no pardon, allows of none; it is not at all concerned about that matter, but seeks its own satisfaction in a way of strict justice; the law is all for justice: mercy comes in by another covenant. It was never in the nature and constitution of the law to give life to a sinner; the law cannot do that: it can give life to a righteous man, but not to a sinner; the law will prosecute him to death: it would act contrary to itself, to its own declared judgment and eternal sanction, if it should do otherwise. *Cole.*

Grace pleaseth a believer so well, that he cannot but study to please God in all things ever after the law of grace constrains him. *ibid.*

While we endeavour to prepare our way to Christ by holy qualifications, we do rather fill it with stumbling-blocks and deep pits, whereby our souls are hindered from ever attaining to the salvation of Christ. Christ would have us to believe on him that justifies the ungodly, and therefore he doth not require us to be godly before we believe: He came as a physician for the sick, and doth not expect they should recover their health in the least degree before they come to him. The vilest sinners are fitly prepared and qualified for this design, which is to shew forth the exceeding riches of grace, pardoning our sins and saving us freely. It is no affront to Christ, or slighting or contemning the justice and holiness of God, to come to God while *we are polluted* sinners; but rather it is an affron-*ting and contemning* the saving grace, merit, and ful-*ness of Christ, if* we endeavour to make ourselves right-

eous and holy before we receive Christ himself, and all holiness and righteouness in him by faith. *Marshal.*

The suretiship-righteousness of Christ, which is through faith upon believers, is his perfect conformity to the moral law in all that which the justice of God did by virtue thereof demand in behalf of the elect from Christ as their surety, that they might, not only in a way of grace, but in a way of justice, be brought to that eternal blessedness and glory whereto God in his infinite love had appointed them. *Mather.*

God's infinite goodness, grace, mercy, and love, are infinitely glorified in the gift of Christ an infinite saviour; his infinite justice and holiness, in justifying a believer by his infinitely meritorious righteousness. A believer is more honourably justified by the infinitely meritorious righteousness of Christ imputed to him, than an angel by his inherent, perfect, personal righteousness, which is but the obedience of a finite person: a believer is more honourably sanctified by that grace which is the purchase of Christ's infinite merit, and the fruit of his spirit dwelling in him, than an angel by that grace which is the gift only of God's creating bounty. *Glascock.*

The righteousness of the law in a strict legal sense (for I must be forced to distinguish, I know many in this age will not understand me, but they that have ears to hear let them hear) I say the righteousness of the law in a strict legal sense admits of no degrees, it must be perfect or none. It is true, a gradual tendency towards the exact righteousness of the law is commendable in any; but, because it is not a fulfilling of the law, the law will not reward it, but punish that man as a sinner, not because he goes so far in his obedience, but because he goes no farther. A man may do many things; but, if he doth not always do every thing that is right in the law, the law will curse that man, and his former righteousness *shall* not be remembered. Cole.

True justifying faith puts the soul (as sensible of its *lost condition* by the law) upon flying for refuge unt

Christ's righteousness, (which righteousness of his is not an act of grace by which he makes our obedience accepted with God for justification, but his personal obedience to the law in doing and suffering for us what that required at our hands.) This righteousness true faith accepteth, under the skirt of which the soul being shrouded, and by it presented as spotless before God, it is accepted, and acquitted from condemnation.

Bunyan.

The transcendent graciousness of the gospel covenant consists not in requiring less righteousness, to give title to life, than was due at first; but in not requiring a perfect righteousness personally for that end, but providing and accepting that of a surety, according to the apostle, *Rom.* viii. 3, 4. The law could not give us life, because, being weakened by sin, we could not perform the perfect righteousness which is required: but what the law could not do, Christ has done, giving us a title to life, fulfilling the righteousness of the law on our behalf. *Clarkson.*

The redeeming power of the blood of Christ is greater than the condemning power of sin. This excellency it hath from the dignity of his person (for it is the blood of God, *Acts* xx. 28.) which makes his obedience and sufferings give more glory to God than our suffering in hell would have done. *Mather.*

Whoever hath Christ, cannot be poor; whoever wants him, cannot be rich. *Dyer.*

If Christ be not thy Jacob's staff, to guide thee to heaven; he will never be thy Jacob's ladder to lift thee thither. *ibid.*

The Lord Jesus is as a strong arm that draws a bow. The greater the strength of the arm is, the swifter is the flight of the arrow, and the farther the arrow goes. Christ being the strength of all believing souls, he draws the bow for them with a mighty arm. *Crisp.*

Some are all their days laying the foundation, and *are never able to build* upon it to any comfort to themselves or usefulness to others. And the reason is, be-

cause they will be mixing with the foundation, stones that are only fit for the following building. They will be bringing their obedience, duties, mortification of sin, and the like, unto the foundation. These are precious stones to build with, but unmeet to be first laid to bear upon them the whole weight of the building. The foundation is to be laid in mere grace, mercy, pardon, pardon in the blood of Christ; this the soul is to accept of and to rest in merely as it is grace, without the consideration of any thing in itself, but that it is sinful and obnoxious to ruin. This it finds a difficulty in, and would gladly have something of its own to mix with it: it cannot tell how to fix these foundation-stones without some cement of its own endeavours and duty: and because these things will not mix, they spend a fruitless labour about it all their days. But if the foundation be of grace, it is not at all of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. If any thing of our own be mixed with grace in this matter, it utterly destroys the nature of grace, which, if it be not alone, it is not at all.

Owen.

Of most other things, it may be said, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity:" but of the Scriptures, "Verity of verities, all is verity." *Arrowsmith.*

In the Scriptures, there are *Επινικια*, songs of victory; but such as exalt, not the prowess of man, but the glory of God. So Exod. xv.

Επικηδια, or funeral songs: but such as celebrate Christ's death, and the good-will of God therein. So Psalm xxii. and Isai. liii.

Ερωτικα, songs of love: but such as set forth the love of Christ to his spouse the Church, and her mutual affection to him. So Psalm xlv. and the Book of Canticles. There are also

Βουκολικα, sacred pastorals: but such as magnify no other shepherd but God alone. Yea,

Γεωργικα too, or songs relative to husbandry: but such *as ascribe all to him.* Let Virgil be asked, "*Quid faciat lætas segetes,*" or, what makes a good harvest? As

he will wholly insist on this or that secondary cause of fertility.—Ask David, he presently falls, in his georgics, upon praising God as the author of all fruitfulness: "Thou visitest the earth, and blessest it; thou makest it very plenteous. Thou makest it soft with the showers of rain, and blessest the increase of it. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy clouds drop fatness," Psalm lvi. *ibid.*

The two Testaments, Old and New, like the two breasts of the same person, give the same milk. *ibid.*

[Grace is the same, as to principle, in all God's children; how various soever it may seem]. If you draw water out of one and the same well, with vessels of different metal; one of brass, the other of tin, a third of earth; the water may seem, at first, to be of a different colour: but, when the vessels are brought near to the eye, this diversity of colour vanishes, and the water in each, when tasted of, has the same relish.—The same remark may likewise be accommodated to the several styles, in which the penmen of Holy Scripture have respectively written. *ibid.*

We are generally desirous to have fair and well-printed Bibles; but the fairest and finest impression of the Bible, is, to have it well printed on the reader's heart. *ibid.*

Quaint notions, philosophical speculations, and strains of wit, if set in competition with the oracles of God, are but as so many spiders' webs, to catch flies; fitter for the taking of fancies, than the saving of souls. *ibid.*

Other books may render men learned unto ostentation; but the Bible only can make them really wise unto salvation. *ibid.*

The dust, or the finery, about your Bibles, is a witness now, and will at the last day, be a witness, of the enmity of your hearts against Christ as a prophet. *Boston.*

Do not you teach the Bible, but let the Bible teach *you.* Fanch.

For wolves to devour sheep, is no wonder: but for

sheep to devour one another, is monstrous and astonishing. *Anon.*

The fountain of Christ's blood is always open. We sin daily; and, every day, we sue out our discharge in Christ's name. The best of God's children make but too much work for pardoning mercy. We contract new filth, by walking up and down in a dirty, defiling world. *Manton.*

It is said of the diamond;

Incidit gemmas, sed non inciditur ipse:
Hircino cantùm sanguine mollis erit.

i. e. "it cuts other jewels; but is, itself, cut of none: nothing will soften it, but steeping it in the blood of goats."

Nor will man's adamantine heart be softened to purpose, until steeped in the blood of Christ, the true scapegoat. *Arrowsmith.*

Nothing, but the blood of God, can satisfy the justice of God, or calm the awakened conscience. *Chapman.*

If thou hast not the blood of Christ at the root of thy profession, thy profession will wither, and prove but painted pageantry to go to hell in. *Wilcox.*

Without the blood of Christ upon thy conscience, all thy services are dead. *ibid.*

I may be ashamed to think, that, in the midst of so much profession, I know so little of the blood of Christ, which is the main thing in the gospel. *ibid.*

[The works of men], without the blood of sprinkling, will be but as a withered leaf amidst the inextinguishable burning. *Hervey.*

Happy the people, on whom the blood of Christ is sprinkled! this will screen and protect them, like the mark, which the man, clothed with linen, set on the foreheads of God's chosen ones, Ezek. ix. 6. or, like the line of scarlet thread, which Rahab bound to the window of her house, Josh. ii. 18, 19. *ibid.*

My *soul, thou* art now as a bird in the shell; in a *shell of flesh, which* will shortly break, and let thee go. *This feeble* vessel of the body will certainly, ere long

be split on the rock of death; and then must thou, it's present pilot, forsake it, and swim to the shore of eternity. Therefore, O everlasting creature, see, and be sure, thou content not thyself with a transitory portion. *Arrowsmith.*

God's gracious biddings are effectual enablings. *Wilcox.*

Were saints their own carvers, they would soon cut their own fingers. *Dyer.*

When thou art enlarged in duty, supported and most assisted in thy Christian course, remember, that thy strength lies in God, not in thyself. When thou hast thy best suit on, thy best suit of spirituality and strength, remember who made it, who paid for it, and who gave it thee. Thy grace, thy comfort, is neither the work of thy own hand, nor the price of thy own desert. Be not, therefore, proud of that which belongs to another, even God. Divine assistance will be suspended, if it becomes a nurse to pride. *Gurnall.*

Strong affections make strong afflictions. *Owen.*

High professor, despise not weak saints. Thou mayest come to wish to be in the condition of the meanest of them. *Wilcox.*

While Israel marched through the wilderness, the blackest night had a pillar of fire; and the brightest day a pillar of cloud. So, in this world, things never go so well with God's Israel, but they have still something to groan under; nor so ill, but they have still comfort to be thankful for. In the church militant, as in the ark of old, there are both a rod and a pot of manna. *Arrowsmith.*

I write my blessing to your child. You have borrowed him from God; for he is no heritage to you, but a loan. Love him as folks do borrowed things. *Rutherfoord.*

They are got into the lee of the harbour, before the *storm comes on.* They are not lost to you, but laid up *in Christ's treasury* above. You shall meet them again. *They are not sent away, but sent before.* *ibid.*

Though men, of the lowest stations, have, generally, the fewest troubles; yet it was not so with Christ. His case was alike remote, both from the grandeur of princes, and from the tranquillity of the vulgar. Pre-eminence in the vast multitude of his sorrows, and the first place among the afflicted and oppressed, was his distinction.

Believers must and will serve God, in duty and obedience; but they must not expect that their duties and obedience will bring them any thing. It is Christ brings every thing you get. While you look to get by what you do, you will but get a knock; because of so much sinfulness in your duties. If you would have any good, you must get it by Christ. Your obedience is that, wherein you are to walk, in the world, and before the world, that you may [shew forth the power of faith, and] be profitable unto men. But, as for getting any thing, assure yourself, that, while you labour to get by your duties, you provoke God, as much as lies in you, to punish you for such presumption, and for the filthiness of the things which you perform. *Crisp.*

When men would have any favour from a king, they do not apply to a scullion in the kitchen, but to the favourite; by whom, the king has declared, he will grant and deliver all things. When the people came to Pharaoh, Pharaoh sent them to Joseph; and as Joseph said, Pharaoh would do. So, would you have any thing of God, go to Christ; and, by Christ, go to the Father. *ibid.*

The obedience and atonement of Christ are as sufficient to secure perfectly all sinners that fly by faith under the covert of his wings, as the immeasurable circuit of the sky is roomy enough for a lark to fly in, or as the immense brightness of the sun is lightsome enough for a labourer to work by. *Hervey.*

When the thunders roar, and the lightnings flash; when the clouds pour down water, and an horrid storm comes on; all, that are in the open air, retire under the *branches of a thick* tree, or fly to some other commodi

ous shelter. [So] the blood and righteousness of Christ are a covert. Hither we may fly, and be screened; hither we may fly, and be safe. Safe, as was Noah, when he entered the ark, and God's own hand closed the door, and God's own eye guided its motions. *ibid.*

If we are for setting buttresses to the house that is built upon a rock; what is this, but a disparagement to the foundation? If the foundation be already firm and good, why are you for endeavouring to strengthen it? So far as you set up any props unto Christ the foundation, who is to bear up all by himself; so far you disparage Christ, so far you bring him down, and give him not the pre-eminence. *Crisp.*

Christ is a sure foundation. So sure, that lay what load you can upon him, he stoops not; and therefore he was excellently typified by the pillars of brass, in Solomon's Temple. They were made of brass, to shew their strength, whereon the whole weight of the porch of the temple lay. *ibid.*

You that are believers, and are under some particular trial; if you run to any inherent grace or temper of spirit that is in yourselves, or any qualifications, or any performances that you can tender, and look after all or any of these, as that which will bring you the comfort, the support, or the supplies you want; while you look faintly and coldly upon Christ, and on the freeness and sureness of the grace which Christ brings along with himself; so long you deny unto Christ that pre-eminence, which God has given him above all beside. *ibid.*

If thou ever sawest Christ, thou sawest him a rock, higher than self-righteousness, Satan, and sin. And this rock doth follow thee; and there will be a continual dropping of honey and grace, out of this rock, to satisfy thee. *Wilcox.*

Hast thou but a mind to Christ? Come and take the *water of life freely.* It is thine. It is given to thee. *There is nothing* looked for from thee, to take thy portion *in Christ.* Thine he is, as much as any person's *under heaven.* Crisp

Dost thou thirst? that is, hast thou a mind really to Christ, that Christ should say really to thy soul, I am thy salvation? It may be, thou art suspicious of thyself, and thy heart is apt to say, "Christ is not my portion; I am not fit for Christ; I am a great sinner; I must be holy first." Alas! this is bringing a price to Christ. But you must come, without money and without price. And what is it, to come without money or price? It is to take Christ, and the waters of life, merely and simply as a gift. *ibid.*

These are the sure mercies of David, when a man receives the things of Christ, only because Christ gives them; and not in regard to any action of our's, as the ground of taking them. *ibid.*

Let men be ever so great enemies to Christ, yet as soon as he sets up himself in their hearts, they will love him, own him, serve him, and suffer for him. *Dyer.*

Seeing Christ hath fastened heaven to the far end of the cross, and he will not loosen the knot himself, and none else can (for when Christ ties a knot, all the world cannot undo it;) let us, then, count it exceeding joy, when we fall into divers temptations. *Rutherfoord.*

The noise and expectation of Christ's cross, are weightier than the cross itself. *ibid.*

Christ and his cross are too good guests, worth entertaining. Men would fain have Christ by himself and so have him cheap: but the market will not come down. *ibid.*

The cross of Christ (or, suffering for his sake,) is a crabbed tree to look at; but sweet and fair is the fruit it yields. *ibid.*

Welcome the cross of Christ, and bear it triumphantly: but see it be indeed Christ's cross, not thy own. *Wilcox.*

A believer studies more how to adorn the cross, than how to avoid it. *Dyer.*

Christ *with his* cross is better than the world *with it's crown.* *ibi*

Christ the law-giver, will always speak in vain, *without Christ the* Saviour. *V*

If you have been looking at works, duties and qualifications, instead of looking to Christ, it will cost thee dear. No wonder you go complaining. Graces are no more than evidences: the merits of Christ alone, without thy graces, must be the foundation for thy hope to bottom on. Christ only is the hope of glory.

Wilcox.

He that builds upon duties, graces, &c. knows not the merits of Christ. This makes believing so hard, and so far above nature. If thou believest, thou must, every day, renounce (from being any part of thy dependance) thy obedience, thy baptism, thy sanctification, thy duties, thy graces, thy tears, thy meltings, thy humblings; and nothing but Christ must be held up.

ibid.

When we come to God, we must bring nothing but Christ with us. Any ingredients, or previous qualifications of our own, will poison and corrupt faith. *ibid.*

In the highest commands, look at Christ, not as an exactor to require, but as a debtor by promise, and as an undertaker to work. *ibid.*

As water, falling on a rocky way, glides off, as fast as it falls; whence the way is as hard, as before the rain fell, and a man may stand as firmly there as before: so all our sinfulness, while we are in the way of Christ, as thick as it falls, passeth off from us to him, and from him also, by virtue of that satisfaction which he hath made to the justice of God. *Crisp.*

As the payment of a great sum, all at once, and at a day, is a better payment, than by a penny a year, until a thousand years be out; so Christ's satisfying the Father, at once, by one sacrifice of himself, is a better satisfaction, than if we should have been infinite days in paying that which his justice requires, and his indignation to sin doth expect. *ibid.*

Let it be observed, that Christ's active obedience to the law for us, and in our room and stead, does not exempt us from personal obedience to it; any more than his sufferings and death exempt us from a corporal death

or suffering for his sake. It is true, indeed, we do not suffer and die, in the sense he did; to satisfy justice and atone for sin: so neither do we yield obedience to the law, in order to obtain eternal life by it. By Christ's obedience for us, we are exempted from obedience to the law, in this sense; but not from obedience to it, as a rule of walk and conversation, by which we may glorify God, and express our thankfulness to him for his abundant mercies. *Gill.*

It is Christ's work, to take every present sin off the conscience of the believer, by the application of his blood and sacrifice. Hence he is said to be the Lamb of God that taketh away, that continues to take away, the sins of the world. *ibid.*

Before God enlightened me into the righteousness of Christ, and justification by it; I used to wonder, how it was, that, seeing Christ lived thirty-three years and six months upon earth, only his death, or, at most, the last week of his life, should be of any avail for the salvation of sinners. But, blessed be God, I have long seen that Christ was, all that time, working out a perfect obedience for my acceptance with the Father. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," is a text that amply accounts for his having spent above thirty-three years below, previous to his crucifixion: and is a truth, by which my soul is nourished and fed to life everlasting. *Romaine.*

If I had the righteousness of a saint, says one, O how happy should I be! If I had the righteousness of an angel, says another, I should fear no evil. But I am bold to say, that the poorest sinner, who believes in Christ, has a righteousness infinitely more excellent, than that of either saints or angels. If the law asks for sinless perfection, it is to be found in Christ my divine surety. If the law requires an obedience, that may stand before the burning eye of God; behold, it is in Jesus my mediator. Should the strictest justice arraign me, and the purest holiness make its demands upon me; I refer them both to my dying and obedient Immanuel. V

him the Father is always well-pleased; and in him, the believer stands complete. *Hervey.*

Jesus says, concerning his people; "If they have sinned, I have taken their sins upon myself. If they have multiplied transgressions, as the stars of heaven, my Father hath laid on me the iniquities of them all. They are my redeemed ones; I have bought them with my blood: I cannot lose my purchase. If they are not saved, I am not glorified." *ibid.*

While Christ was upon earth, he was more among publicans and sinners, than among Scribes and Pharisees: for these were self-righteous [and so, not fit company for him who came to seek and to save the lost.] *Wilcox.*

Christ is not more rich himself, than he is liberal to contribute of his treasures. He makes his people sharers, to the uttermost, of all that he has. *Crisp.*

I know, the sun will overcloud and eclipse, and I shall again be put to walk in the shade. But Christ must be welcome to come and go, as he thinketh meet. Yet his coming would be more welcome to me, than his going. *Rutherfoord.*

Christ is ever present in and with his people: and, while he is on board the ship cannot sink. He may, indeed, seem to sleep, for a time; and to disregard both the vessel and the storm. Do you awake him, by prayer and supplication. *Giffard.*

A true friend divides the cares and doubles the joys, of his brother in affection. Christ does more: for he takes the cares of his people entirely on himself; and not only doubles their joys, but makes all his joys their own. *Anon.*

Suppose a king's son should get out of a besieged city, and leave his wife and children behind, whom he loves as his own soul; would this prince, when arrived at his father's palace, delight himself with the splendour of the court, and forget his family in distress? No; but, having their cries and groans always in his ears, he would come post to his father, and entreat him, as ever

he loved him, that he would send all the force of his kingdom, to raise the siege, and save his dear relations from perishing. Nor will Christ, though gone up from the world, and ascended into his glory, forget his children for a moment, that are left behind him. *Gurnall.*

Why was the bread of life hungry, but that he might feed the hungry with the bread of life? Why was rest itself weary, but to give the weary rest? Why was the prince of peace in trouble, but that the troubled might have peace? None but the image of God could restore us to God's image. None, but the prince of peace, could bring the God of peace and the peace of God to poor sinners. *Dyer.*

We cannot [fully] understand the sufferings of Christ. God only knows what is in the curse of the law. God alone knows what is the true [and utmost] desert of sin. How, then, do we know what Christ suffered, when the punishment due to our sin, when all our iniquities met on him, [and he had] the curse of the law upon him! God only knows what is in these things. *Owen.*

It is a peculiar kind of expression, *Eph.* iii. 19. where the apostle prays, that they might "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." We may know that, experimentally, which we cannot know comprehensively: we may know that, in it's power and effects, which we cannot comprehend in its nature and depths. A weary person may receive refreshment from a spring, who cannot fathom the depth of the ocean from whence it proceeds. *Owen.*

I have seen the white side of Christ's cross. How lovely hath he been to his oppressed servant. *ibid.*

How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand! as little do I take away of my great sea, the boundless love of Christ. *Rutherfoord.*

My Lord Jesus is kinder to me than ever he was. It pleaseth him to dine and sup with his afflicted prisoner. The king *feasteth* me, and his spikenard casteth a sweet *smell. Put Christ's* love to the trial, and throw all *your burdens upon* it, and then it will appear love in

deed. We employ not his love, and therefore we know it not. *ibid.*

It is less injurious to Christ, to doubt even of his existence; than to doubt of his willingness to save a wounded, broken-hearted sinner. *Ryland.*

Do not legalize the gospel; as if part remained for you to do and suffer, and Christ were but an half-mediator: or as if you was to bear part of your own sin, and make part-satisfaction. Let sin break thy heart, but not thy hope. *Wilcox.*

Christ will be a pure, total redeemer and mediator, and thou must be an undone sinner; or Christ and thou will never agree.

Sin has stripped man of his moral clothing. Man's own righteousness will not cover his nakedness: and whoever is destitute of Christ's righteousness, is a naked person. *Gill.*

Christ's righteousness is called, The righteousness of the law, *Rom.* viii. 4. For, though righteousness does not come by our obedience to the law, yet it does by Christ's obedience to it. Though, by the deeds of the law, as performed by man, no flesh living can be justified; yet, by the deeds of the law, as performed by Christ, all the elect are justified. *ibid.*

Christ's righteousness is also called, The righteousness of faith, Rom. iv. 13. not as if faith were our righteousness, either in whole, or in part; but because faith receives the righteousness of Christ, puts it on, rejoices in it, and boasts of it. *ibid.*

Christ's righteousness is called, The best robe, Luke xv. 22. or, as the Greek text hath it, the first robe, *την στολην την πρωτην.* For, though Adam's robe of righteousness, in innocence, was the first in wear, this was first provided in the covenant of grace; this was first in designation, though that was first in use. *ibid.*

We must be declared free from guilt, and invested *with a righteousness* that will stand before the law of *sinless perfection*, and entitle us to the kingdom of heaven. *And if* we have it not in ourselves, where must

we look for it, but as existing solely in the person of Jesus Christ? Dependance therefore upon that righteousness, as wrought out by him for believers, and appointed of God for sinners to trust in; is the gracious faith of the gospel, by which the soul is justified.

Satan and the world may ask us, "How can ye be justified by a righteousness which is not your's?" We answer, "The righteousness of Christ is our's; and our's, by as great a right, as any other thing we possess: to wit, by the free gift of God; for it hath pleased him to give us a garment, who were naked; and to give us, who had none of our own, a righteousness answerable to justice." *Cowper.*

Whatever comes in, when thou goest to God for acceptance, besides Christ, call it antichrist; bid it begone; make only Christ's righteousness triumphant. All, besides that, is Babylon; which must fall, if Christ stand: and thou shalt rejoice in the day of the fall thereof. *Wilcox.*

The law presseth on a man till he flies to Christ; then it says, Thou hast gotten a refuge, I forbear to follow thee: thou art wise; thou art safe. *Bengelius.*

To take up mercy, pardon, and forgiveness, absolutely on the account of Christ, and then to yield all obedience in the strength of Christ, and for the love of Christ, is the life of a believer. *Owen.*

When thy conscience is thoroughly afraid with the remembrance of thy sins past, and the devil assaileth thee with great violence, going about to overwhelm thee with heaps, floods, and whole seas of sins to terrify thee and draw thee from Christ, then arm thyself with such sentences as these: Christ, the Son of God was given, not for the holy, righteous, worthy, and such as were his friends; but for the wicked sinners, for the unworthy, and for his enemies. Wherefore, if Satan say, Thou art a sinner, and therefore must be damned; then answer thou, and say, Because thou sayest I am a sinner, therefore will I be righteous and be saved: and if he reply, Nay, but sinners must be damned; then an

swer thou, and say, No; for I fly to Christ, who hath given himself for my sins; and therefore, Satan, in that thou sayest I am a sinner, thou givest me armour and weapons against thyself, that with thine own sword I may cut thy throat, and tread thee under my feet.

Luther.

We shall be sure to meet with the devil, with conscience, with wicked men, and with the law of God, in our way to heaven, and we can deal with none of them but by that righteousness which hath satisfied all; let us bring that along with us, and they will all flee before it. If a sinner comes in his own righteousness, shut him out, saith God; so saith conscience, so saith the law, so saith the devil: but when one comes clothed with the righteousness of Christ, let him in, saith God; so saith conscience, so saith the law, and let the devil say a word to the contrary if he dare. *Cole.*

The grace of God is little beholden to that doctrine which would give the glory of it to a graceless thing [free-will]; and as little have the souls of men to thank it for: it feeds them with dreams and fancies, which, when they awake, will leave them hardly bestead and hungry. Therefore sit not down under the shadow of that gourd, it hath a worm at the root. And they will not be held guiltless, nor kept from the scorching sun, whoever they be that shelter themselves in the covert of it; it is a spark of men's own kindling, wherewith though compassed round, they will lie down in sorrow. *Cole.*

Our faith, our repentance, our obedience, being sinfully defective, cannot, as such, make any thing due to us but punishment, and so cannot oblige the Lord to perform the promises to justify, pardon, or save us: for that which obliges the Lord to execute the threatening cannot oblige him to fulfil his promise. How then is the Lord obliged? how come the promises to be accomplished? Not upon the account of our defective performances, but for Christ's sake, and so through *grace.* Clarkson.

The commemoration of the covenant of works at Sinai was made to convince the Israelites of their sin and misery, to drive them out of themselves, to teach them the necessity of satisfaction, and to compel them to Christ; and so is subservient to the covenant of grace. *Wittsius.*

When any person comes practically to know how great a thing it is for an apostate sinnner to obtain the remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, endless objections, through the power of unbelief, will arise unto his disquietment. Wherefore that which is principally suited to give him rest, peace, and satisfaction, and without which nothing else can do so, is the due consideration of, and the acting faith upon that infinite effect of divine wisdom and goodness in the constitution of the person of Christ. This, at first view, will reduce the mind unto that conclusion, If thou canst believe, all things are possible. For what end cannot be effected hereby? what end cannot be accomplished that was designed in it? Is any thing too hard for God? Did God ever do any thing like this, or make use of any such means for any other end whatever? Against this no objection can arise. On this consideration of him faith apprehends Christ to be, a indeed he is, the power of God and the wisdom of God unto the salvation of them that do believe, and therein doth it find rest with peace. *Owen.*

From the intimate conjunction that is between Christ and the church it is just and equal in the sight of God, according to the rules of his eternal righteousness, that what he did and suffered in the discharge of his office should be esteemed, reckoned, and imputed unto us, as unto all the fruits and benefits of it, as if we had done and suffered the same things ourselves. *ibid.*

By virtue of his union with the church, which of his own accord he entered into, and his undertaking therein to answer for it in the sight of God, it was a righteous thing with God to lay the punishment of all our sins *upon him, so as* that he might freely and graciously

pardon them all, to the honour and exaltation of his justice as well as of his grace and mercy. *Owen.*

God's great design, in the method of salvation made choice of by infinite wisdom, was to stain the pride of all glory, that no flesh might glory in his sight, but that he that glorieth should glory only in the Lord. *Halyburton.*

In his cross were divine holiness and vindictive justice exercised and manifested, and through his triumph grace and mercy are exerted to the utmost. This is that glory which ravisheth the hearts and satiates the souls of them that believe. In due apprehension hereof let my soul live, in the faith hereof let me die, and let present admiration of this glory make way for the eternal enjoyment of it in its beauty and fulness. *Owen.*

It is a vain and a foolish thing to seek for the justification of a sinner without satisfaction to the justice of God, which he can never give but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him. While justice remains unsatisfied, it will overthrow all other grounds of hope for justification, which we may take up from our own works and doings. The justice of God strikes an unjustified sinner under the curse, and so leaves him in a condemned state. *Cole.*

If any thing ought to be accounted worthy of the most attentive consideration, it is indeed the covenant of grace. Here a way is shown unto a better paradise than the earthly, and to a more certain and more stable happiness than that from which Adam fell. Here new hopes shine upon ruined mortals, which by so much ought the more to be acceptable, by how much it came more unexpected. Here conditions are offered, to which eternal life is annexed; conditions not again by us to be performed, which would cause the mind to despond; but by him who departed not this life, before he had truly said, *It is finished.* *Witsius.*

God never made the covenant of works with any *man since the fall,* either with expectation that he should

fulfil it, or to give him life by it; for God never appoints any thing to an end to which it is utterly unsuitable and improper. Now the law, as it is a covenant of works, is become weak and unprofitable to the purpose of salvation, and therefore God never appointed it to man, since the fall, to that end. And besides, it is manifest that the purpose of God, in the covenant made with Abraham, was to give life and salvation by grace and promise; and therefore his purpose, in renewing the covenant of works, was not, neither could be, to give life and salvation by working, for then there would have been contradictions in the covenants, and instability in him that made them. *Mod. Divin.*

It is certain in experience, that with a poor and slender *It may be*, at the first, many a soul hath cast anchor within the veil, blindfold, and yet in the end have found a firm and sure holdfast in the heart of God and the grace of Christ to hang upon with the whole weight of their soul, the weight of their sins hanging upon them also with all their pondus. *Goodwin.*

Our faith, or act of believing, cannot be the matter of justification, for that is is an imperfect thing, and so cannot be reckoned in the place of perfect righteousness: for it must be a righteousness perfectly perfect that justifies, as it was a sin perfectly sinful that condemned. This righteousness also must be our own in a way of right, (as Adam's sin also was) though performed in the person of another: Christ and Adam being parallels in their headship, the imputation of one's guiltiness and the other's righteousness are righteously applied to their respective seeds. And this was a main end of God's putting those he would justify into Christ: That he being made sin and a curse for them, they might be made the righteousness of God in him; and so God might be just in justifying them. Cole.

Though we and our best works are vile, yet the *Lord, looking* upon the forehead of our High-priest *sees holiness* engraven there; looking upon the face

Christ, he there also beholds it for us, and becomes well-pleased with us; and we, in the faith thereof, may be persuaded and assured of our acceptance with the Lord through the faith of him. Thou that sayest there is nothing but sin in me, sin and vileness in all I do; I answer, It is true, the Lord can see nothing but sin in thee; but he cannot look upon the High-priest but there he sees holiness, yea, the holiness of Jehovah there. *Mather.*

Let us see what matter of support and encouragement faith may fetch from Christ's death for justification; and surely that which hath long ago satisfied God himself for the sins of many thousands now in heaven, may very well serve to satisfy the heart and conscience of any sinner now upon earth in any doubts, in respect of the guilt of sin, that can arise. The apostle, after that large discourse of justification by Christ's righteousness, in the former part of the epistle to the Romans, and having shewed how every way it abounds, *chap.* v. in *chap.* viii. sits down, as it were, like a man over-convinced, as *ver.* 31. "What then shall we say to these things?" He speaks as one satisfied, and even astonished, with abundance of evidence; having nothing to say, but only to admire God and Christ in this work; and therefore presently throws down the gauntlet, and challengeth a dispute with all comers: Let conscience, carnal reason, law, sin, hell, and devils, bring all their strength. "Who is he that shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? who shall condemn?" Paul dares to answer them all, and carry it with these few words, "It is God, that justifies; it is Christ that died; and, as in verse 37, In all these things we are more than conquerors." And so likewise the author of Psalm 130, when his soul was in deep distress by reason of his sins, *ver.* 1, 2. yet this was it that set his soul to wait upon God, That there *was plenteous redemption* with him. Christ's redemption *is not merely* a price of ransom equivalent, or *making a due satisfaction* according to the just demerit

of sin; but is plenteous redemption; there is abundance of the gift of righteousness, and unsearchable riches of Christ: yea, 1 *Tim.* i. 14, The grace of our Lord (that is of Christ) was [we translate it] abundant; but the word reacheth farther, It was overfull, redundant, more than enough: and yet says Paul, I had sins enough to pardon, one would think to exhaust it, I was a blasphemer, &c. but I found so much grace in Christ, even more than I knew what to do withal. *Goodwin.*

Is Christ God's beloved, with and in whom he is well pleased? And is he not thy beloved; What is the matter? Is thy narrow soul more curious about an object of its love than God himself is? O let him be to each of us our beloved! If he be God's beloved, he may as well be thine. Is he able to satisfy God's vast thoughts, and is he not able to satisfy thee, poor creature? God himself is satisfied and at rest in him. Says Christ, *Prov.* viii. 30, I was daily his delight. And wouldst thou be happier than God is? Is he God's beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased? and wilt thou be pleased in any thing but Christ? *ibid.*

There is a far greater power in the blood of Christ to save and cleanse than in sin to defile and destroy, *Rom.* viii. 3. The law became weak to do good, but it hath power to condemn. The strength of sin is the law; the law gives strength to sin, because, by virtue of the curse of the law, sin reigns and defiles the souls of men, through that righteous curse, 'The soul that sins shall die.' But the blood of Jesus Christ hath greater power to save, than sin (together with the law) hath to condemn. For the blood of Christ takes away and abolisheth it utterly: where this blood is applied and brought home, sin itself cannot ruin that soul. The soul is poisoned and corrupted by sin; but the blood of Christ takes away that poison, and makes the soul pure and holy, as if it had never sinned. Therefore as to those discouragements, 'I shall never get power against these corruptions, They will be my ruin;' these are deep reflections on Jesus Christ, as if sin were strong

er than he: as if thy sin were more powerful to damn thee than Christ is to save thee. *Mather.*

An approbation of God's way of saving sinners by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace, I take to be the true scriptural notion of justifying faith. And it really gives him that glory which he designed by all this contrivance, the glory of his wisdom, grace, mercy, and truth. *Halyburton.*

Whensoever thou hast to do in the matter of justification, and disputest with thyself, how God is to be found that justifieth and accepteth sinners, where and in what sort he is to be sought, then know thou that there is no other God but the man Christ Jesus. Embrace him and cleave to him with thy whole heart, setting aside all curious speculations of the Divine Majesty. For he that is a searcher of God's majesty shall be overwhelmed of his glory. I know by experience what I say. Christ himself saith, *Joh.* xiv. 6. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." Therefore, besides this way Christ, thou shalt find no other way to the Father, but wandering; no truth, but hypocrisy; no life, but eternal death. Wherefore mark this well in the matter of justification, that, when any of us shall have to wrestle with the law, sin, death, and all other evils, we must look upon no other God but only this God incarnate, and clothed with man's nature. *Luther.*

How should faith triumph in this! Is not our High-priest in the sanctuary? Is he not clothed with garments of salvation and righteousness? And doth he not bear the names of his people upon his shoulders and upon his breast before the Lord? Thy particular concerns (if thou art a believer) are written upon his heart, with the pen of a diamond, in such lasting letters of loving-kindness as shall never be blotted out.

Mather.

It is not the righteous and godly man, but the sinful *and ungodly* man, that Christ came to call, justify, and *save.* *So that if* you were a righteous and godly man.

you were neither capable of calling, justifying, or saving by Christ; but being a sinful and ungodly man, I will be bold to say unto you, as the people said unto blind Bartimeus, 'Be of good comfort, arise, he calleth thee,' and will justify and save thee. Go then unto him, I beseech you; and if he come and meet you (as his manner is) then do not unadvisedly say with Peter, Depart from me, O Lord! for I am a sinful man; but say in plain terms, O come unto me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! yea, go farther, and say as Luther bids you, Most gracious Jesus, and sweet Christ, I am a poor miserable sinner, and therefore do judge myself unworthy of thy grace; but yet, having learned from thy word that thy salvation belongeth to such an one, therefore do I come unto thee to claim that right which through thy gracious promise belongeth unto me. Assure yourself, man, that Jesus Christ requires no portion with his spouse: No verily; he requires nothing with her but mere poverty; the rich he sends empty away, but the poor are by him enriched. And indeed, saith Luther, the more miserable, sinful, and distressed a man doth feel himself, and judge himself to be, the more willing is Christ to receive him and relieve him. So that, saith he, in judging thyself unworthy, thou art thereby become truly worthy; and so indeed thou hast gotten a greater occasion of coming unto him. Wherefore then, in the words of the apostle, I do exhort and beseech you to come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. *Mod. Divin.*

Let thy soul be set on the highest mount that any creature was ever yet set upon, and enlarged to take in view the most spacious prospect both of sin and misery, and difficulties of being saved, that ever yet any poor humble soul did ever cast within itself, yea, join to these all the hinderances and objections, that the heart of *man* can invent against itself and salvation; *lift up thy* eyes and look to the utmost that thou can *see, and Christ* by his intercession is able to save th

beyond the horizon and utmost compass of thy thoughts; even to the utmost. *Goodwin.*

. Justification through the blood of Christ is ever accompanied with sanctification by his Spirit; therefore, if the Spirit of God be working and burning in thy heart, fear not, thou art washed in the chrystal sea which is before the throne; if sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, thou art justified by his blood. *Mather.*

There is no finding out to perfection the breadth, and length, the depth and height, of God's grace. The love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, passeth all understanding. His grace, and his gifts by grace, unto believers are ineffable, infinitely free, without any merit in us, or any motive; astonishingly rich, while we were enemies, most defiled and deformed ones, and equally without power to resist damning justice, and without the prudence to ask saving mercy, *Rom.* v. 10. *Ephes.* iii. 18, 19. *Col.* i. 21. Angels, our elders and betters, were not pitied but irreversibly doomed to destruction. More than angels and all the creation was worth was given to redeem us, even as much more than they were worth as God by essence exceeds the mere creature. Christ is God by eternal essence, and yet God spared not his Son, but gave him up to redeem rebels; whereat hell envies, and heaven wonders. A vast tribute of praise must hence rise due, so due, that if believers be silent, the stones must needs cry out. Believers, that are no longer mutes, have the dumb devil expelled, and their mouths opened for praise, their tongues touched with a coal from the holy altar, and qualified to lift up the name of their Redeemer. *Burgess.*

The grand design of all false religions is to patch up a self-righteousness for the justification of a sinner before God. The Christian religion teacheth us to seek justification before God by the imputation of Christ's *righteousness to* us upon our believing on him; which *righteousness* purchaseth for us not only pardon of sin, *but also grace* and glory. The true and proper impu-

tation of Christ's righteousness is the act of God as a judge, accepting the righteousness of Christ for a believer, as such a righteousness as that law which is the rule of judgment requires, for the justification of a sinner. The denial of a believer's justification by such an imputation of Christ's righteousness to him stabs the very heart of christianity, and destroys all true revealed religion. *Glascock.*

God hath called us by his grace to his kingdom of glory: If we do not go by the door of grace, we shall not find the door of the kingdom of glory. Believers have not one thought of glory but what grace suggests to them, it never entered into their minds to conceive such a thing. Free grace openeth the door, and they see such things as eye never saw, and hear such things as ear never heard, nor did enter into the heart of man. *Cole.*

God was a God to Adam before he fell; but to be a God to sinners, this is grace. He was a God to Adam in innocency by virtue of the covenant of works; but he is not a God to any sinner but in a way of free grace. Now that was the covenant, I will be a God to thee and thy seed, *Gen.* xvii. 7. Abraham was a sinner and a child of wrath by nature, as well as others; yet God was his God truly. For God to be a God to them that never sinned, there may be merit; but for God to be a God to those that have sinned, this is grace indeed! Angels are saved by works, sinners cannot be saved but by grace. That ever the Lord should condescend to engage in such a relation, as to give a sinner interest in him and propriety in him as his God, this is grace. They that do not think this is grace, they need not argument, but pity and prayer. *Mather.*

The first part of the covenant is this, that God would be a God to him and his seed; and this indeed is most comprehensive, and includes all the rest: I will establish *my covenant and* be a God to thee and thy children *after thee.* And what is it for God to be a God to *man, thy God,* or a God to thee? It is when he giv-

to a poor creature a special interest and propriety i himself; so that God, in his all-sufficiency and effic ency, is ours, and we are his. All his attributes an works are ours for our good. I will be thy God, th is, all my attributes shall be thine, for thy good, as rea ly as they are mine for my glory. The infinite wisdo of God shall contrive their good whose God he is; th infinite power of God shall effect it: the infinite love God is theirs; his mercy, truth, and all his attribute are theirs; as his essential power, so his working, or h actual power: as he will be all to them, so he wi work all for them. *Mathe*

The Lord will be a sun and a shield, *Ps.* lxxxiv. 1 He will be a shield to keep off all evil, and a sun to f them with all comfort. I am (saith he) thy exceedin great reward. As if he should say, Abraham, Wha soever is in me, all that I have, all my attributes, an thine, for thy use; my power, my wisdom, my counse my goodness, my riches, whatsoever is mine in th whole world, I will give it for thy portion: and all th I have are thine. And might not he well say, he wi an exceeding great reward? Who can understand th height and depth, and breadth and length, of this reward that is, Thou shalt have all kind of comfort in me, an thou shalt have them in the greatest measure. *Preston*

Let no man look for sanctification before he is just fied, that is, let no man be discouraged from coming t Christ, because he finds not in himself that godly sor row for sin, that ability to repent, that disposition o heart, which he desires to have. We must first be i Christ before we are new creatures. And this is a com mon fault among us; we would fain have somethin before we come: we think God's pardons are not fre but we must bring something in our hand. You kno the proclamation runs thus, buy without money, thi is, come without any excellency at all; because we ar *commanded to come* and take the water of life freel *Therefore do not* say, I have a sinful disposition a *an hard heart*, and cannot mourn for sin as I sho

therefore I will stay till that be done. It is all one as if thou should say, I must go to the physician; but I will have my wounds well, and my disease healed first, and, when that is done, I will go to the physician. What is the end of thy going to him, but to have thy disease healed! I say, it is the same folly. The end of going to Christ is, that this very hardness of thy heart may be taken away, that this very deadness of thy spirit may be removed; that thou mayest be enlivened, quickened, healed; that thou mayest hate sin; for he is thy physician: look not for it beforehand: thou must first be in Christ before thou canst be a new creature. *Preston.*

Sinners can do nothing but make wounds that Christ may heal them, and make debts that he may pay them, and make falls that he may raise them, and make deaths that he may quicken them, and spin out and dig hells for themselves that he may ransom them. Now will I bless the Lord that ever their was such a thing as the free-grace of God, and a free ransom given for sold souls: only, alas! guiltiness maketh me ashamed to apply to Christ, and to think it pride in me to put out my unclean and withered hand to such a Saviour! But it is neither shame nor pride for a drowning man to swim to a rock, nor for a ship-broken soul to run himself ashore upon Christ. *Rutherfoord.*

Consider what a comprehensive blessing salvation is, and take an estimate thereof by comparing it with the temporal deliverances of the Israelites. Those proceeded from a common ordinary love; these from a peculiar distinguishing affection: their deliverances were effected not without hazard of their persons; our salvation is effected only by the blood of Christ: the issue of theirs was not much more than civil tranquillity, sitting under their vines and fig-trees; the issue of ours is grace, glory, joy, and those things which eye *hath not seen, nor* ear heard, nor have entered into the *heart of man* to conceive. Clarkson

Do as much as thou wilt; but stand, with all

weight, upon Christ's righteousness. Take heed of having one foot on thy own righteousness, and another on Christ's. *Wilcox.*

It is the hardest thing in the world, to take Christ alone for our righteousness. Join any thing to him, of your own, and you unchrist him. *ibid.*

Whatsoever is of nature's spinning, must be all unravelled, before Christ's righteousness can be put on. *ibid.*

Nothing can kill sin, but the beholding of Christ's righteousness. *ibid.*

Christ's exalted state in glory does not make him neglectful of poor sinners, nor scornful to them: no, he has the same heart in heaven, that he had on earth. He went through all thy temptations, dejections, sorrows, and desertions. He drank the bitterest of the cup, and left the sweet. The condemnation is out. He drank up all the Father's wrath, at one draught; and nothing, but salvation, is left for thee. *ibid.*

Christ commands, in heaven, as he does upon earth. There is nothing he can ask of the Father, but it is answered. He never has a nay. If any come to be a suitor to him, to put up a petition for him, he is sure to speed. *Crisp.*

If you would pray, but cannot, and so are discouraged; see Christ praying for you, and using his interest with the Father for you. *Wilcox.*

Thou, who has seen Christ all, and thyself absolutely nothing; to whom Christ is life, and who art dead to all righteousness besides; thou art a Christian: one highly beloved, and who has found favour with God. *ibid.*

The sons of God have much in hand, and more in hope. *Manton.*

God's people are too touchy, in looking so much for respect from men. It argues a secret leaven of pride, if they murmur when the world doth not esteem them. *A Christian is an* unknown man in the world; and *therefore should not* take it ill, if he finds himself slighted. *ibid.*

None can make a Christian, but he that made the world. *Hart.*

A Christian, that roweth against the stream of the flesh and blood, is the world's wonder, and the world's reproof. *ibid.*

The best of Christians are found in the worst of times.

Though a gracious soul may not always enjoy sensible communion with God in the ordinances; yet it has always this good sign, that it cannot be easy and satisfied without it. *Giffard.*

Have you any reason to believe that you have, at any time, had communion with God, in private or in public, in your closet, or in the family, or in the house of God, under any ordinance, either the ministry of the word, or prayer, or the supper of the Lord? Then you may be assured, Christ has made satisfaction for you; or you would never have enjoyed such communion. *Anon.*

Persons, who make a peculiar profession of godliness, should be peculiarly circumspect in their moral walk; else, they hurt, not only their own character, but, above all, the cause of religion itself: and resemble a man, who carries fire in one hand, and water in the other. *Bacon.*

Of all created comforts, God is the lender. You are the borrower, not an owner. *Rutherfoord.*

God's comforts are no dreams. He would not put his seal on blank paper, nor deceive his afflicted ones that trust in him. *ibid.*

If comfort fails, God's faithfulness does not. What though your pitcher is broke? The fountain is still as full as ever. *Williams.*

I had rather be a means of comforting one of God's dear children, than gain the applause of a nation. *Ryland.*

Better is it to go with a few to heaven, than with a multitude to hell, and be damned for the sake of company. *Parr.*

Complaining of God, is one thing; complaining to God, is another. Caser.

Sometimes, perhaps, thou hearest another Christian pray with much freedom, fluency, and movingness of e

pression: while thou canst hardly get out a few broken words in duty. Hence thou art ready to accuse thyself, and to admire him. As if the gilding of the key made it open the door the better. *Gurnall.*

Take heed of judging thyself unconverted, because thou mayest not have felt so much horror, as some others, in thy first convictions. O, believer, thou hast not heard so much, it may be, of the rattling of the chains of hell; nor, in thy conscience, so much of the out-cries of the damned, as to make thy very flesh tremble: but hast thou not seen that, in a bleeding Christ, which hath made thy heart melt, and mourn, and loath thy lusts? It is strange, to hear a patient complain of the physician (when he finds his prescriptions work effectually), merely because the operation did not affect him so violently as in some others. Soul, thou hast the more reason to bless God, if the convictions of his spirit have wrought so kindly on thee, without those extremities of terror, which have cost others so dear. *ibid.*

It may be, thou seest another abound with that joy, which thou wantest: and art therefore ready to think, his grace is more, and thine less, than it really is: while, perhaps, thou mayest have as much real grace, as he; only thou wantest a light to shew thee where it lies. *ibid.*

Even when a believer sees no light, he may feel some influence; when he cannot close with a promise, he may lay hold on an attribute, and say, "Though both my flesh and my heart fail, yet divine faithfulness and divine compassions fail not. Though I can hardly discern, at present, either sun, moon, or stars; yet will I cast anchor in the dark, and ride it out, until the day break, and the shadows flee away. *Arrowsmith.*

Divine consolations are then nearest to us, when human assistances are furthest from us. *Cave.*

Watch against constitution sins. See them in their vileness, and they will never break out into act. *Wilcox.*

Contentment without the world, is better than the *world without* contentment. Dyer.

Be willing to want what God is not willing to give. ibid

Be contented with a mean condition. This is not the time for the manifestation of the sons of God. Though others that are wicked may have a larger portion and allowance than you, yet God doth not misplace his hands (as Joseph thought his father did, Gen. xlviii.) but puts them upon the right head, and assigns temporal blessings to the right persons. Ephraim is not preferred before Manasseh without reason. *Manton.*

Brown bread, with the gospel, is good fare. *Dodd.*

When the heart is full of God, a little of the world will go a great way with us. *Storer.*

Content is all we aim at with our store:

" If that be had with little, what need more?"

As the wicked are hurt by the best things, so the godly are bettered by the worst.

It is a greater act of grace, for God to work conversion in a sinner, than to crown that conversion with glory. It is more gracious and condescending in a prince to marry a poor damsel, than, having married her, to clothe her like a princess. He was free, to do the first, or not; but his relation to her pleads strongly for the other. God might have chosen, whether he would have given thee grace, or no; but, having done this, thy relation to him, and his covenant with thee in his Son, do oblige him to add more and more, until he hath fitted thee as a bride for himself in glory. *Gurnall.*

If Satan seeks to puzzle thee about the time of thy conversion; content thyself with this, that thou seest the streams of grace, though, perhaps, the exact time of thy first receiving it (like the head of Nilus) may not easily be found.

You may know the sun is up, though you did not observe when it rose. *ibid.*

Conversion of the soul to God is like changing a kennel of mud into a river of chrystal. *Engleheart.*

Since Christ looked upon me in conversion, my heart *is not my own: he* hath run away with it to heaven. Rutherfoord.

A daily conversation in heaven is the surest forerunne

of a constant abode there. The spirit of God, by enabling us hereunto, first brings heaven into the soul, and then conducts the soul to heaven. *Arrowsmith.*

Happy conviction of guilt! which performs the same beneficent office the baptist discharged of old: it prepares the way of the Lord, and renders his salvation inestimably precious to the soul. *Venn.*

The greatness of Christ's merit is not known, but to a poor soul at the greatest loss. Slight convictions will occasion but slight prizings of Christ's blood and righteousness, *Anon.*

God's corrections are our instructions; his lashes, our lessons; and his scourges, our school-masters. Whence both in Hebrew and Greek, chastening and teaching are expressed by one word, מוסר and παιδεια. *Brookes.*

It is of the Lord's mercy, that our affliction is, not execution, but correction. He that hath deserved hanging, may be glad to escape with a whipping. *ibid.*

"If we run away from the Lord, he has a covenant-rod for our backs: but it is a rod in the hand of a father." *Lovett.*

Creature comforts are often, to the soul, what suckers are to a tree: and God takes off those, that this may thrive. *Ryland.*

When thou gettest no comfort in hearing, nor ease to thy spirit in praying, and yet growest more eager to hear, and art more frequent in prayer; Oh soul, great are thy faith and patience!

Blessed is your condition, if you have this testimony in your conscience; that, acknowledging your own natural ignorance and blindness, you call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, to enlighten your mind, to make his way plain before you, and to give you a strong and distinct perception of the great things that concern your eternal peace.

Blessed is your condition, if, feeling your utter incapacity to procure the favour of God by the best of your duties, reformations, or performances, and confounded

in your own sight, for your great defects, you build all your hope, of acceptance with God, on what Christ has done and suffered for you. Blessed is your condition, if, afflicted with the exceeding great vileness of your natural affections, and longing for victory over them; for a more spiritual mind, and for a farther progress in love both to God and man; you depend on the renewing, sanctifying grace of the holy spirit, to work this divine change within you.

This is to believe in the only begotten Son of God, without partiality and without hypocrisy. This the word of God pronounces to be that dependance in Christ which shall never be confounded. *Venn.*

If you are under darkness of soul, first go to God with it: and then, go to some experienced saint of your acquaintance. It is good, sometimes, to light your candle at a neighbour's fire. *Anon.*

Great was the cry in Egypt, when the first-born, in each family, was dead: but are there not many families, where all are dead together? *Boston.*

Death is the friend of grace, and the enemy of nature. *Dodd.*

Mankind are like sheep, grazing on a common: the butcher comes continually, and fetches away one, and another, and another; while the rest feed on, unconcerned, until he comes for the last. *Herne.*

The dread and dislike of death do by no means prove that a person is not a child of God. Even a strong believer may be afraid to die. We are not, in general, fond of handling a serpent, or a viper, even though its sting is drawn, and though we know it to be so. *Martin.*

Though a believer may have his darkness, doubts and fears, and many conflicts of soul, while on his dying-bed; yet usually, these are all over and gone, before his last moments come, and death does its work and office upon him. From the gracious promises of God, to be with his people even unto death; and from the scriptural accounts of dying saints; and from the observations I have made, through the course of my life; I am of opinion

that, generally speaking, the people of God die comfortably; their spiritual enemies being made to be as still as a stone, while they pass through Jordan, or the stream of death. *Gill.*

The consideration of the state of the dead, as of persons asleep, should moderate our sorrow for the loss of departed friends. What master of a family can be uneasy, at finding his family, his wife, his children, his servants, in a sound, fast sleep at midnight? May he not expect, that they will rise, in the morning, well and healthful, and ready to go about any service that may be proper for them? When Christ said, concerning Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;" "Lord," said the disciples, "if he sleep, he shall do well." The saints, who are fallen asleep, must needs do well. They cannot do otherwise than well, who not only sleep, but sleep in Jesus. *ibid.*

As a man that takes a walk in his garden, and spying a beautiful, full-blown flower, crops it, and puts it into his bosom; so the Lord takes his walks in his gardens, the churches; and gathers his lilies, souls fully ripe for glory, and with delight takes them to himself. *ibid.*

There is no way to live with God in glory, but by dying. Christians would be clothed with a blessed immortality, but they are loath to be unclothed for it: they pray, thy kingdom come; and, when God is leading them thither, they are afraid to go. What is there, in this valley of tears, that should make us weep to leave it? *Cripplegate Lect.*

A cockle-fish may as soon crowd the ocean into its narrow shell, as vain man ever comprehend the decrees of God. *Anon.*

How harmless is defamation from a fellow-creature, when the great Creator smiles! *Anon.*

We can never expect to see deism decline, while those principles, which support it, are maintained by [professing Christians] themselves. But, would Protestants *return to their* ancient Protestant doctrines, and live *and practise* accordingly, then would religion flourish;

and Atheism, Deism, Arianism, and every other ism sink apace. *Gill.*

Nature is so corrupted, as not to understand its own depravation. *Owen.*

If we trace man's forgetfulness of God up to its real source, it will afford us the most afflicting evidence of his natural depravity, and prove that he is a despiser of the Lord God Omnipotent. *Venn.*

A lively dependance on the Lord Jesus Christ implies an intimate and most interesting connection between him and the soul; a knowledge of him, affecting to the heart, and full of influence; an application to him, daily and persevering. So that a man, who is living in such dependance on the Son of God, might as reasonably call in question the reality of transactions passing between himself and his friends on earth, as whether he is indeed a believer on Jesus. *Venn.*

A Judas may have the sop; the outward privileges of baptism, the Lord's supper, Church-membership, &c. But, like John, to lean on Christ's bosom, is the gospel ordinance posture, in which we should hear, pray, and perform all duties. *Wilcox.*

Nothing but lying on Christ's bosom, will dissolve hardness of heart; and make thee mourn kindly for sin; and humble thee indeed; and make thy soul cordial to Christ; yea, transform the ugliest piece of hell into the image and glory of Christ. *ibid.*

Looking at the natural sun, weakens the eye; but the more you look at Christ, the sun of righteousness, the stronger and clearer will the eye of faith be. Look but on Christ, and you will love him and live on him. *ibid.*

See Christ, and you see all. Keep your eye steadily fixt on his blood and righteousness; and only look at your graces in the second place. Else, every blast of temptation will shake you. *ibid.*

If you would so see the sinfulness of sin, as to loathe *it, and to mourn for it*; do not stand looking upon sin, *but first look upon* Christ as suffering and satisfying. *ibid.*

He, who looks upon Christ through his graces, is like one that sees the sun in water; which wavers and moves, as the water doth. Look upon Christ, only as shining in the firmament of the Father's grace and love; and there you will see him in his own genuine glory and unspeakable fullness. *ibid.*

He, who sets up his sanctification to look at, to comfort him; sets up that which will strengthen his doubts and fears. Do but look off Christ, and presently, like Peter, you begin to sink into distress, discouragements and despondency. *ibid.*

A Christian seldom wants comfort, but by breaking the order and method of the gospel; i. e. by looking upon his own righteousness, instead of looking off to the perfect righteousness of Christ. What is this, but choosing rather to live by candle-light, than by the light of the sun? *ibid.*

Of a small handful of outward things, I am ready to say, it is enough. But that, which I long passionately for, is a large heart-full of God in Christ. *Arrowsmith.*

I would rather utter one of those groans the apostle speaks of, *Rom.* viii. 26. than shed Esau's tears, have Balaam's prophetic spirit, or the joy of the stony-ground hearer. *Boston.*

Thy deserts are hell, wrath, rejection; Christ's deserts are life, pardon, acceptation. If God hath shewn thee the former, he will give thee the latter. *Wilcox.*

When I have been asked to spend an afternoon with gentlemen of a learned education, and unquestionable ingenuity, I have fancied myself invited to take a turn in some beautiful garden, where I expected to have been treated with a sight of the most delicate flowers, and most amiable forms of nature: when to my surprise I have been shewn nothing but the most worthless thistles, and contemptible weeds. *Hervey.*

Is a father to be blamed for striking a cup of poison *out of his child's* hand? Or God, for stripping us of *those outward* comforts, which would run away with *our hearts from* him? Madan.

By nature, there is no difference between the elect and reprobate. Paul was as bloody a persecutor, as Domitian, or Julian; Zaccheus as unconscionable and covetous a worldling, as was that rich glutton damned to hell. The elect and reprobate, before converting grace make the difference, are like two men, walking in one journey, of one mind, and one heart. They resemble Elijah and Elisha, walking and talking together, when, lo! a chariot of fire suddenly severs them; and Elijah, is rapt up into heaven, while Elisha is left behind upon earth. So is it, when God's effectual calling, quite unlooked for, comes and separates those two, who, before, were walking together, yea, running to the same excess of riot. The one returns back to the Lord, from whom he was fallen; while the other, being himself untouched by God, marvels that his former companion hath forsaken him, and walks on still in the old course of his sins, to his final condemnation. *Cowper.*

When God called Paul, he found him a persecutor. Saul was seeking his father's asses, when Samuel came to call him to the kingdom. Peter and Andrew were mending their nets; Matthew was sitting at the receipt of custom; when Christ called them. So, when we do inquire of our own consciences, how we were employed, when the Lord called us by his grace; we shall find, that we were employed either in vain, wicked, or worldly things: so that we had no mind to his kingdom. Let the praise, therefore, of our calling, be reserved to the Lord only. *ibid.*

What are all the visible impieties in this world, but so many comments on the depravity of our fallen nature? A converted person may say, "Lord, such a drunkard, such an adulterer, such a sodomite, or murderer, &c. was cut off from the same piece that I was; and only free grace came between us." O Christian, if grace hath made thee white paper, thou wert by nature as a very dunghill-rag, as the filthiest sinner.

Crip. Lect.

In glory, all religious differences and disputes will

for ever cease. There will be an universal shaking of hands, in heaven. *Wilkes.*

If discretion sit not in the saddle, to rein and bridle in thy zeal, thou wilt soon be hurried over hedge and ditch, until thou fallest down some precipice, or other, by thy irregular acting. *Gurnall.*

For God to be a God to any one includes eternal life: for when God becomes a God to a sinner, then he becomes that to him which he is to himself. And what is God to himself? Without doubt the fountain of eternal and consummate blessedness. God, when he gives himself in grace to a man, gives him all things; for he is all things. That man finds in God a shield against every evil, and an exceeding great reward. And what can he desire more to perfect happiness? From whence it is that the apostle joins these two, for God to be a God to any one, and to prepare for him a city. *Witsius.*

God saith to the soul, I am thy salvation; and the soul saith again, Thou art my God. Faith is nothing else but a spiritual echo, returning that voice back again which God first speaks to the soul. For what acquaintance could the soul claim with so glorious a Majesty, if he should not first condescend so low as to speak peace, and whisper secretly to the soul, that he is our loving God and Father, and we his peculiar ones in Christ; that our sins are all pardoned, his justice fully satisfied, and our persons freely accepted in his dear Son? *Sibs.*

Love by nature, when it seeth, cannot but cast out its spirit and strength upon amiable objects, and things loveworthy. And what fairer things than Christ! O fair sun, and fair moon, and fair stars, and fair flowers, and fair roses, and fair lilies, and fair creatures! but O ten thousand thousand times fairer Lord Jesus! Alas! I wronged him in making comparison this way. O black sun and moon, but O fair Lord Jesus! O black flowers, and black lilies, and black roses; but O fair, fair, for ever fair, Lord Jesus! O all fair things, black, de-

formed, and without beauty, when ye are set beside the fairest Lord Jesus! O black heavens, but O fair Christ! O black angels, but O surpassingly fair Lord Jesus!

Rutherfoord.

That love is not sincere which proceedeth not from, which is not a fruit of faith: those who do not first really believe on Christ can never sincerely love him: it is faith alone that worketh by love towards Christ and all his saints. If therefore any do not believe with that faith which unites them to Christ, which within purifies the heart, and is outwardly effectual in duties of obedience, whatever they may persuade themselves concerning love unto Christ, it is but a vain delusion. Where the faith of men is dead, their love will not be living and sincere. *Owen.*

Shall we tell men, that unless they be holy they must not believe on Jesus Christ, that they must not venture on Christ for salvation till they be qualified, and fit to be received and welcomed by him? This were to forbear preaching the gospel at all, or to forbid all men to believe on Christ. For never was any man qualified for Christ. He is well qualified for us, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. But a sinner out of Christ hath no qualifications for Christ, but sin and misery. Whence should he have any better but from and in Christ? Nay, suppose an impossibility, that a man were qualified for Christ, I boldly assert that such a man would not, nor ever could, believe on Christ. For faith is a lost, helpless, condemned sinner's casting himself on Christ for salvation; and the qualified man is no such person. Shall we warn people that they should not believe on Christ too soon? It is impossible they should do it too soon. Can a man obey the great gospel command too soon? Or do the great work of God too soon? A man may too soon think he is in Christ, and that is, when he is not so indeed. And this we frequently teach. But that is only an idle dream, not faith. A man may too soon fancy *that he hath faith*; but, I hope, he cannot act faith too *soon. If any* should say a man may be holy too soon

how would that saying be reflected on? And yet it is certain, that, though no man can be holy too soon (because he cannot too soon believe on Christ, which is the only spring of true holiness) yet he may, and many do, set about the study of that he counts holiness too soon, that is, before the tree be changed, before he have the new heart, and the Spirit of God dwelling in him, which is only got by faith in Christ. And therefore all this man's studying of holiness is not only vain labour, but acting of sin. And if this study and these endeavours be managed, as commonly they are, to obtain justification before God, they are the more wicked works still.

Trail.

The gospel's glory is, that it is the ministration of the Spirit. The great privilege of believers is, that the Lord manifests himself to them as he doth not to the world: when he manifests his authority in the command, it is then powerful; when he manifests his goodness and truth in the promise, it is full of sweetness; when he manifests his wrath in the threatening, it awes the soul; when he manifests his glory in the face of Christ, it is ravishing, reforming, attracting.

Halyburton.

Love works by admiration. That is the voice of love, *Zech.* ix. 17. How great is his beauty! How great is his goodness! The soul, being as it were ravished with that view which it hath of the glorious excellencies of God in Christ, hath no way to express its affections but by admiration. How great is his goodness! How great is his beauty! And this beauty of God is that sweetness and holy symmetry of glory in all the perfections of God, being all in a sweet correspondency exalted in Christ, who is the proper object of our love. To see infinite holiness, purity and righteousness, with infinite love, goodness, grace, and mercy, all equally glorified in and towards the same things and persons, one glimpse whereof is not to be attained in the world out of Christ, *is that beauty of* God which attracts the love of a *believing soul,* and fills it with an holy admiration of *him.*

Owen.

The revelation made of Christ in the blessed gospel is far more glorious, more excellent, and more filled with rays of divine wisdom and goodness, than the whole creation, and the just comprehension of it attainable, can contain or afford. Without the knowledge hereof, the mind of man, however priding itself in other inventions and discoveries, is wrapped up in darkness and confusion. *ibid.*

The humbling our souls before the Lord Christ from an apprehension of his divine excellencies, the ascription of glory, honour and praise, with thanksgiving, unto him, on the great motive of the work of redemption, with the blessed effects thereof, are things wherein the life of faith is continually exercised: nor can we have any evidence of an interest in that blessedness which consists in the eternal assignation of all glory and praise unto him in heaven, if we are not exercised unto this worship of him here on earth. They who desire not to behold the glory of Christ in this world, shall never behold him in glory hereafter unto their satisfaction; nor do they desire so to do: only they suppose it a part of that relief which they would have when they are gone out of this world. For what should beget such a desire in them? Nothing can do it but some view of it here by faith, which they despise or totally neglect. Every pretence of a desire of heaven, and of the presence of Christ therein, that doth not arise from, that is not resolved into, that prospect which we have of the glory of Christ in this world by faith, is mere fancy and imagination. *ibid.*

Whatever men may pretend, no man can be truly and rightly studious of the advancement of the kingdom of God in the world, that hath not first felt the mighty power and blessed effects of it in his own soul. *Shaw.*

To suppose that the Lord Jesus Christ, as the king and head of the church, hath not an infinite divine power, whereby he is able always to relieve, succour, save and deliver it, if it were to be done by the alter-

tion of the whole or any part of God's creation, so as that the fire should not burn nor the water overwelm them, nor men be able to maintain their thoughts or ability one moment to afflict them; and that their distresses are not always the effects of his wisdom, and never from the defect of his power; is utterly to overthrow all faith, hope, and the whole of religion itself. There are no true believers who will part with their faith herein for the whole world; namely, that the Lord Jesus Christ is able, by his divine power and presence, immediately to aid, assist, relieve, and deliver them in every moment of their surprisals, fears, and dangers, in every trial or duty they may be called unto, in every difficulty they have to conflict withal. And to expect these things any otherwise than by virtue of his divine nature, is wofully to deceive our own souls. For this is the work of God. *Owen.*

I am sure my well-beloved is God. And when I say Christ is God, and my Christ is God, I have said all things, I can say no more. I would I could build as much on this, My Christ is God, as it would bear, I might lay all the world upon it. *Rutherfoord.*

They who reject the divine person of Christ, who believe it not, who discern not the wisdom, grace, love, and power of God therein, do constantly reject or corrupt all other spiritual truths of divine revelation. Nor can it otherwise be: for they have a consistency only in their relation unto the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, and from thence derive their sense and meaning. This being removed, the truth in all other articles of religion immediately falls to the ground. *Owen.*

Let it please the Lord to take me out of this life this hour, or whensoever he pleaseth, I leave this behind me, that I do and will acknowledge Jesus Christ for my Lord and my God. I have not this out of the scripture only, but also by great and manifold experience; for the name Jesus hath oftentimes helped me, when no creature could help or comfort me. He that hath

Christ for his king and God, let him be assured he hath the devil for his enemy, who will work him much sorrow, and will plague him all the days of his life. But let this be our comfort and great glory, that we poor people have the Lord of life and of death, and of all creatures, clothed with our flesh and blood, sitting at the right hand of God his father, who ever liveth and maketh intercession for us, defendeth and protecteth us. *Luther.*

Let the world rage while it pleaseth, let it set itself with all its power and craft against every thing of Christ that is in it, which, whatever is pretended, proceeds from an hatred to his person; let men make themselves drunk with the blood of his saints: we have this to oppose unto all their attempts, unto our supportment, namely, what he says of himself: Fear not, I am the first and the last, he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for ever more, and have the keys of hell and death. *Owen.*

It is the person of Christ which is the first and principal object of that faith wherewith we are required to believe in him; and so to do is not only to assent unto the truth of the doctrine revealed by him, but also to place our trust and confidence in him for mercy, relief, and protection, for righteousness, life, and salvation, for a blessed resurrection and eternal reward. *ibid.*

To fancy that all the love of Christ unto us consists in the precepts and promises of the gospel, and all our love unto him in the observance of his commands, without a real love in him unto our persons, like that of an husband to his wife, and an holy affection in our hearts and minds unto his person, is to overthrow the whole power of religion, to despoil it of its life and soul, leaving nothing but the carcass of it. *ibid.*

Blessed Jesus! we can add nothing to thee, nothing to thy glory; but it is a joy of heart unto us that thou art what *thou art*, that thou art so gloriously exalted at *the right hand of* God; and we do long more fully

and clearly to behold that glory, according to thy prayer and promise. *ibid.*

Then do we find food for our souls in the word of truth, then do we taste how gracious the Lord is therein; then is the scripture full of refreshment to us, as a spring of living water, when we are taken into a blessed view of the glory of Christ therein. This is the glory of the scripture, that it is the great, the only outward means of representing unto us the glory of Christ: and he is the Sun in the firmament thereof, which only hath light in itself, and communicates it to all other things besides. *ibid.*

God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins unto them. Because, as God stands in relation to man according to the tenor of the covenant of works, and so out of Christ, he could not, without prejudice to his justice, be reconciled unto them, nor have any thing to do with them otherwise than in wrath and indignation; therefore, to the intent that justice and mercy might meet together, and righteousness and peace might embrace each other, and so God stand in relation to man according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, he put himself into his Son Jesus Christ, and shrouded himself there, that so he might speak peace to his people. Sweetly saith Luther, because the nature of God was otherwise higher than we are able to attain unto, therefore hath he humbled himself unto us and taken our nature upon him, and so put himself into Christ: here he looketh for us, here he will receive us; and he that seeketh him here shall find him. This, saith God the Father, is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, *Matth.* iii. 17. We must not think that this voice came from heaven for Christ's own sake, but for our sakes, even as Christ himself saith, *John* xii. 30. The truth is, Christ had no need that it should be said unto him, *This is my* well beloved Son: he knew that from all *eternity, and* that he should still so remain, though these *words had not* been spoken from heaven: therefore by

these words God the Father, in Christ his Son, cheereth the hearts of poor sinners, and greatly delighteth them with singular comfort and heavenly sweetness, assuring them, that whosoever is married unto Christ, and so in him by faith, he is as acceptable to God the Father as Christ himself, *Eph.* i. 6. He hath made us accepted in the beloved. Wherefore, if you would be acceptable to God, and be his dear child, then by faith cleave unto his beloved Son Christ, and hang about his neck, yea, and creep into his bosom; and so shall the love and favour of God be as deeply insinuated into you as into Christ himself; and so shall God the Father, together with his beloved Son, wholly possess you and be possessed of you; and so God and Christ and you shall become intirely one, according to Christ's prayer, *John* xvii. 22, that they may be one in us, as Thou and I are One. *Mod. Divin.*

None of the Israelites under the Old Testament were ever saved by the old Sinai covenant; neither did any of them ever attain to holiness by the terms of it. Some of them did indeed perform the commandments of it sincerely, though imperfectly: but those were justified first, and made partakers of life and holiness by virtue of that better covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which was the same in substance with the new covenant or testament, established by the blood of Christ. Had it not been for that better covenant, the Sinai covenant would have proved to them an occasion of no happiness, but only of sin and despair and destruction. Of itself it was only a killing letter, the ministration of death and condemnation; and therefore it is now abolished, 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. 8. 9. 10. 11. We have cause to praise God for delivering his church by the blood of Christ from this yoke of bondage: and we have cause to abhor the device of those that would lay upon us a more grievous and terrible yoke, by turning our very new covenant into a covenant of sincere works, and *leaving us no such* better covenant as the Israelites had *under their yoke* to relieve us in our extremity.

Marsh

He that can search in any measure, by a spiritual light, into his own heart and soul, will find, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' a better plea than any he can be furnished withal from any worth of his own. *Owen.*

Many there are who have in notion received the doctrine of free justification by the blood of Christ, whom, while they are secure in their ways, without trouble or distress, it is impossible to persuade that they do not live and act upon that principle, and walk before God in the strength of it. Let any great conviction from the word, or by any imminent and pressing danger, befall these men, then their hearts are laid open; then all their hope is in their repentance, amendment of life, performance of duties in a better manner; and the iniquity of their self-righteousness is discovered. *ibid.*

God, I thank thee I am not as other men, &c. is apt to creep into the heart in a strict course of duties. And this self-pleasing is the very root of self-righteousness, which as it may defile the saints themselves, so it will destroy those who only in the strength of their convictions go forth after an holiness and righteousness: for it quickly produceth the deadly poisonous effect of spiritual pride, which is the greatest assimilation to the nature of the devil that the nature of man is capable of. *ibid.*

Love enlarges the heart to Christ, and every thing of Christ; valuation, delight, satisfaction, accompany it; it makes the heart free, noble, ready for service, compassionate, zealous. To think of glorifying God without hearts, warmed, enlarged, made tender, compassionate by gospel love, is to think to fly without wings, or to walk without feet. What day, almost what business, wherein our love is not put to the trial in all the properties of it; whether it can bear and forbear, whether it can pity and relieve, whether it can *hope all things*, believe all things; whether it can *exercise itself towards* friends and towards enemies, whether it can *give* allowance for men's weakness and temp-

tations; whether it can value Christ above all, and rejoice in him in the loss of all; and many the like things it is continually tried withal. Now nothing so contracts and withers the heart, as to all these things, as the cares of this world do. *ibid.*

Those graces of holiness have the most evident and legible characters of electing love upon them which are most effectual in working us into a conformity to Christ. That grace is certainly from an eternal spring which makes us like unto Jesus Christ. Of this sort are meekness, humility, patience, self-denial, contempt of the world, readiness to pass by wrongs, to forgive enemies, to love and to do good unto all. *ibid.*

No where doth the incredible love of God towards miserable mortals more evidently display itself than in Jesus Christ, which is suited to melt the heart frozen even into ice, and to kindle into ardent flames of mutual love; for the love of Christ constraineth us, 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15, who, swallowed up in the meditation thereof, doth not cry out, 'Art thou, O most loving Jesus, scorched no less with love to me than with the flames of divine wrath against my sins, and shall I grow lukewarm in my love to thee again? Hast thou died for my salvation, and shall not I live to thy glory? Didst thou for my sake descend into hell, and shall I not at thy command cheerfully tread the way to heaven? Didst thou deliver thyself to be tormented by the pains of hell, and shall not I give up myself to thee, to bear thy yoke which is light, and thy burden which is sweet?' It is inexpressible how the pious soul, intent on such meditations, is displeased with its own lukewarmness; desiring and wishing for itself, that a mind an hundred times more capacious might be given, that it might be wholly filled with the love of Christ. *Witsius.*

He that hath the strongest faith, he that believes in the greatest degree the promise of pardon and the remission of sins, I dare boldly say he hath the holiest *heart and the holiest* life. Preston.

Holiness in this life is absolutely necessary to salva-

tion, not only as a means to the end, but, by a nobler kind of necessity, as part of the end itself. Though we are not saved by good works as procuring causes, yet we are saved to good works, as fruits and effects of saving grace, which god hath prepared that we should walk in them. It is indeed one part of our salvation to be delivered from the bondage of the covenant of works; but the end of this is, not that we may have liberty to sin (which is the worst of slavery) but that we may fulfil the royal law of liberty, and that we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Yea, holiness in this life is such a part of our salvation as is a necessary means to make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in heavenly light and glory. Without holiness we can never see God, and are as unfit for the glorious presence as swine for the presence-chamber, of an earthly prince. *Marshal.*

The things which the Holy Ghost discovers, are no other, for substance, but those very things which are contained in the written word: only he affords regenerate persons clearer light to discern them by, than they had before conversion.—Turn a learned man to the same author, which he perused when a young student; he will find the self-same matter, but see a great deal further into it, because he hath now got further light and knowledge. *Arrowsmith.*

Created goodness, being limited, may be liable to fall short. Esau might have somewhat to plead, for saying, "Hast thou but one blessing, O my father?"—But divine goodness is an ocean, that hath neither bank nor bottom. Our heavenly Father hath blessings reserved, as well as bestowed. *ibid.*

Zion's king gets no subjects, but by stroke of sword, in the day of his power. None come to him, but such as are drawn by a divine hand. *Boston.*

Divine help is then nearest, when our misery is at the greatest. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. *When Mordecai is thoroughly humbled, Haman shall be hanged.* Dyer.

We are, in God's hand, as clay in the hand of the potter. Did you ever know a potter thank a vessel of his own making, for its beauty or usefulness? Surely, the praise is due, not to the pot, but to the potter. In a still infinitely higher degree is the whole praise due to God, for the graces and the good works, which he has given us. *Hill.*

Oh trembling believer! if Satan should, at any time, move thee to doubt of thy election, answer him, by telling him, that he was never of God's cabinet-council. *Anon.*

Who had more testimonies of God's favour, than David? Yet was he sometimes at a loss, not only to read, but even to spell his evidences. *Gurnall.*

Unbelief may, perhaps, tear the copies of the covenant, which Christ hath given you: but he still keeps the original, in heaven, with himself. Your doubts and fears are no parts of the covenant; neither can they change Christ. *Rutherfoord.*

I have questioned, whether or no I ever knew any thing of Christianity, save the letters which make up the word. *ibid.*

Doubtings are your sins: but they are also the drugs and ingredients, which Christ, the good physician, makes use of, for the curing of your pride. *ibid.*

Art not thou the son of Adam? And was not he the son of dust? And was not that dust the son of nothing? Why art thou proud, O dust and ashes? says the son of Sirach, Ecclus. x. 9. And Bernard puts this excellent question: *Cùm sis humi limus, cur non es humillimus?* *Arrowsmith.*

Take up all duties, in point of performance; and lay them down, in point of dependance. Duty can never have too much of our diligence, nor too little of our confidence. *Dyer.*

Be serious and exact in duty, having the weight of it upon thy heart: but be as much afraid of taking comfort from thy duties themselves, as from thy sins. *Wilcox.*

Paul styles the Thessalonians, "Beloved of the Lord; because God had chosen them unto salvation." And God himself expresses the election of Jacob, by "Jacob have I loved:" to shew, that free love on God's part is the source and foundation of this favour. *ibid.*

If that saying of the Stoics be true, "*In sapientum decretis nulla est litura*," i. e. in the decrees of wise men there can be no blotting nor blurring; how much more may it be asserted concerning the decrees of the infinitely wise God? If it became Pilate to say, What I have written, I have written; it would certainly mis-become the great and immutable God to blot so much as any one single name out of the Lamb's book of life, written by himself before the world was. We may rest assured, that this book will admit of no deleatur, nor of any expurgatory index. *ibid.*

As in military affairs, commanders have their muster-rolls, wherein are contained the names of all the soldiers they have listed: whence the phrase, *conscribere milites;* and in commonwealths, there are registers kept, wherein are recorded the names of such as are chosen to offices of trust and preferment; whence the title of *patres conscripti*, given to the Roman senators: so the condescension of Scripture, which speaks of God after the manner of men, ascribes to him a book of life, wherein it represents a legible writing and registering of the names of all those persons, whom he hath irreversibly predestinated to life everlasting. *ibid.*

Your election will be known, by your interest in Christ; and your interest in Christ, by the sanctification of the spirit. There is a chain of salvation: the beginning of it is from the Father; the dispensation, through the Son; the application, by the Spirit. In looking after the comfort of election, you must look inward to the work of the spirit in your hearts; then outward to the work of Christ on the cross; then upward, to the heart of the Father in heaven. *Clark.*

Before you go to the university, you ought to go to *school.* *Do not* meddle with election and predestina-

tion, until you have experienced something of divine grace in your effectual vocation. *Bradford.*

By a work of grace in thee, thou mayest as surely know thou art elected, as if thou hadst stood at God's elbow, when he wrote thy name in the book of life. *Gurnall.*

Let us take those words, *Rom.* viii. 30. which way we will; let us read them backwards or forwards; they tell us, that election, and salvation, both initial and final, are undivided, and inseparably united together. *Sladen.*

In every congregation where the faithful word is preached, there are some who belong to the election of grace, [and are either to be called or comforted.] *ibid.*

The evidence, of our election, is in time; the decree itself is from eternity. *ibid.*

Some employments may be better than others; but there is no employment so bad, as the having none at all: the mind will contract a rust, and an unfitness for every good thing; and a man must either fill up his time with good, or at least innocent business, or it will run to the worst sort of waste, to sin and vice. *Anon.*

In all doubtings, fears, and storms of conscience, look at Christ continually. Do not argue it with Satan; but send him to Christ for an answer. *Wilcox.*

There are, in heaven, many thousands of as rich monuments of mercy, as ever thou canst be. The greatest sinner did never surpass the grace of Christ. *ibid.*

Throughout the whole Scripture, there is not one ill word against a poor sinner who is stript of his self-righteousness. Nay, the Scripture expressly points out such a man as the subject of gospel-grace, and none else. *ibid.*

To a lively believer, who enjoys continual fellowship with God, every day is a sabbath, and every meal a sacrament. Hervey.

Believers are not, afterwards, the worse for having *been once Arminians.* They are the better qualified

when God has brought them out of darkness and bondage, to discern and defeat the sophistry of those errors, wherewith they themselves have been deluded. Just as a person, who has been prisoner in an enemy's country, can, when he gets away, turn his knowledge to the advantage of himself, and the better annoyance of his adversaries. *Tozer.*

A ragged saint is dearer to God than a glittering emperor that is without grace. *Anon.*

No worldly thing seems great, to him that minds eternity. *Richardson.*

The law [rightly understood] will not suffer you to consider the most conscientious course of obedience in any other light, than as a testimony that you believe, with godly sincerity, the delightful truth, that Jesus purged away your sins by the sacrifice of himself: for which unspeakable benefit, you love him, you keep his commandments, you abhor those iniquities which made him groan and bleed and die. *Venn.*

File up thy old receipts, which thou hast had from God, testifying the pardon of thy sins. There are some festival days, when God comes forth, clothed with the robes of his mercy, and holds forth the sceptre of his grace more familiarly, to his children, than ordinary; bearing witness to their faith, &c. Then the firmament is clear, and not a cloud to be seen, to darken the Christian's comforts. Love and joy are the soul's repast and pastime, while this feast lasts. Now, when God withdraws, and this cheer is taken off, Satan's work is, how to wear out the remembrance and certainty of these sweet evidences. It behoves thee, therefore to lay up thy writings safely. Such a testimony may serve to non-suit thy accuser many years hence. One affirmative, from God's mouth, for thy pardoned state, carries more weight, though of an old date, than a thousand negatives from Satan's. *Gurnall.*

Duties are our's: Events are the Lord's. When we *go to meddle* with events, and to hold a court (as it *were) upon* God's providence, and to ask him, "How

wilt thou do this, or that?" Faith then begins to lose ground. We have nothing to do there. It is our part, to let the Almighty exercise his own office, and steer his own helm. There is nothing left us but to see how we may be approved of him, and how we may roll the weight of our weak souls (in well doing) upon him who is God omnipotent: and when what we thus pursue, miscarries, it shall neither be our sin, nor our cross.

ibid.

If Satan haunts thee with fears of thy spiritual estate, ply thee to the throne of grace, and beg a new copy of thy old evidence which thou hast lost.

The original is in the pardon-office in heaven, whereof Christ is master. Thy name is on record in that court. Make thy moan to God. Hear what news from heaven, rather than listen to the tales which are brought by thine enemy from hell. Can you expect truth from a liar, or comfort from an adversary? Did the devil ever prophesy well of believers? *ibid.*

It is better to have the praise of evil men's hatred, than the scandal of their love and approbation.

Manton.

It is of the highest importance, that you examine yourself, where the stress of your dependance, for the good of your soul, is placed. To what fountain are you looking, for pardon and strength, for comfort, sanctification [and salvation?] Whether to your own good purposes and endeavours, to your own prayers, meditations, and good qualities; or to that inexhaustible treasury [of grace and glory, which] God has provided for poor, helpless, guilty men, in the person, [blood, righteousness, and intercession] of the Lord Jesus Christ? *Venn.*

Measure not thy graces by the attainments of others, but by Scripture-trials. *Wilcox.*

A believer's holy deportment often gives a check to the sins *of others.* The profane stand in awe, when *grace comes forth*, and sits, like a ruler in the gate, to *be seen of all that* pass by. Gurno

He, in whom ye trust, O believers, is a great God, and loves to do all things like himself. Wherefore, look for great things from him; great assistances; great enlargements; great deliverances; yea, the forgiving of great sins, and the great gift of a great salvation. *Arrowsmith.*

We often come off better than we expect, and always better than we deserve. *Green.*

The Christian hath such an harvest of glory and happiness coming, as will never be fully got in. It will be always reaping-time, in heaven. *Crip. Lectures.*

In all the experiences of the saints, there is an universal oneness, and yet a beautiful variety. *Fernie.*

When a pump is dry, a pail of water, thrown into it, will fetch it again. If your soul is in a dry, cold frame, get a lively Christian to tell you his experience: the fire will, probably, catch from his heart to your's. *Ryland.*

When thou art at the greatest pinch, strength shall come. When the last handful of meal was dressing, then was the prophet sent to keep the widow's house. *Gurnall.*

It is the proper nature of faith, to issue itself in the admiration of that which is infinite. *Owen.*

Faith is, thought of it's object, who is Christ, with trust in him, or dependance upon him, for life and salvation, under a conviction of our misery and helplessness in ourselves. *Brine.*

Pride and unbelief will put you on seeing somewhat in yourself first: but faith will have to do with none but Christ. *Wilcox.*

Faith takes God at his word, and depends upon him for the whole of salvation. God is good, and therefore he will not, he is true and faithful, therefore he cannot deceive me. I believe, that he speaks as he means, and will do what he says? for which reason, let *me be strong* in faith, giving honour to God, and *rejoice with joy* unspeakable and full of glory. Ryland.

Vigorous faith is not governed by sensible appearan

ces. It looks through all the terrifying aspects of things, to an invisible, ever present God; a God, who has left nothing to an after-thought in his decrees, nor is ever a moment too late in his actions. *ibid.*

Happy man, whosoever thou art, that can'st look, by an eye of faith, at the gospel, as the charter of thy liberties; at the condemning law, as cancelled by thy surety; at the earth, as the footstool of thy father's throne; at heaven, as the portal of thy father's house; at all the creatures, in heaven and earth, as an heir is wont to look at his father's servants, and which are therefore his, so far as he shall need them: according to that, "All are your's, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." *Arrowsmith.*

Faith can support, when nature shrinks; faith can call God father, when he frowns; and make some discovery of a sun, through the darkest cloud. *ibid.*

Faith and love are the two arms, and the two eyes, without which, Christ can neither be seen, nor embraced. *ibid.*

Faith only can find out God, though not to perfection, yet to salvation. *ibid.*

Sin is that which interposeth itself between the soul and the light of God's countenance. But, whether it be a slender mist, or a thick cloud: an infirmity, or a rebellion; the sun of righteousness, eyed by faith, can and will dispel it, so as to make it vanish. *ibid.*

The two conduits of faith and love, being lain from the Christian's soul to the fountain of living waters, fetch in from thence a daily supply of such grace, as will certainly end in a fulness of glory. *ibid.*

Faith is the soul's going out of itself for all [it wants.] *Boston.*

Faith empties the heart of sin, and fills it up with grace. *Anon.*

Presumption is heart-whole: but faith hath a sense of sickness, and looketh to the promises; and looking *to Christ therein*, is glad to see a known face.

Rutherfoor

The use of faith now (having already closed with Christ for justification,) is, to take out a copy of your pardon: and so you come to have peace with God. For, since faith apprehends pardon, but never pays a penny for it, no marvel, that salvation does not die and live, ebb or flow, with the working of faith. *ibid.*

The Christian must trust in a withdrawing God.

The boldness of faith ventures into God's presence, as Esther into Ahasuerus's, when no smile is to be seen on his face, no golden sceptre of the promise perceived by the soul. Yea, faith trusts, not only in a withdrawing, but in a killing God. Now for a soul to make its approaches unto God, by a recumbency of faith, even while God seems to fire upon it, and shoot his frowns like envenomed arrows into it, is hard work, and will try the Christian to purpose. Yet, such a masculine spirit we find in that poor woman of Canaan; who (as it were) took up the bullets which Christ shot at her, and with an humble boldness of faith, sent them back again to him in her prayers, Isai. l. 10.—Job xiii. 15. *Gurnall.*

True faith is of a working, stirring, lively nature. *Fides pinguescit operibus*, saith Luther. Faith is, in some sort, nourished by an holy life. As the flesh, which clothes the frame of man's body, though it receives it's heat from the vitals within, yet conduces to preserve the very life of those vitals [by a kindly reciprocation of influence;] so, works evangelically good, and actions truly gracious, though they have their life from faith, are yet powerful helps to maintain the liveliness of faith. We sometimes see a child nursing the parent that bore him, and therein he performs but his duty. *ibid.*

Faith in Jesus is the trust and alliance of the heart on him, for help and deliverance. *Venn.*

The essence of faith is, an unfeigned, humble dependance upon the submission to the righteousness of *God, as accounted* or given to us; and that not of debt, *but of grace.* ibid.

A base suspicion, of salvation by faith being prejudi-

cial to the interests of virtue, is hardly ever to be rooted out of the minds of men, until they experience the power of faith in some degree themselves. *Venn.*

Faith, though it may be weak and imperfect, instead of exalting itself against the justice of God, and standing before him in the confidence of a lie, puts all from itself, and gives the whole glory of our salvation where it is due. *ibid.*

He that lives without fear, shall die without hope. *Dyer.*

Such is the omnipotency of our God, that he can and doth make, to his elect, sour sweet, and misery felicity. *Philpot.*

Although believing souls have, here, fellowship with God in Christ, sufficient to stay their stomachs, as at a breakfast; yet that degree of fruition is wanting, which will satisfy them fully, as at a feast superior to that of ordinances. *Arrowsmith.*

Give me a man as full of policy, as was Achitophel; as eloquent, as Tertullus; and as learned, as the Athenians were in St. Paul's time: yet, if, with Achitophel, he plot against the people of God; if, with Tertullus, he have the poison of asps under his lips; and, with the Athenians, be given to superstition; for all his policy, eloquence, and learning, I am bold to call him, in Scripture-language, a fool. *ibid.*

If a dog bark at a sheep, the sheep will not bark again at the dog. *Dodd.*

Sense of want makes us eloquent. The true reason, why books of prescribed forms of prayer pass through so many editions, is, because the convincing influence of God's spirit passes through so few hearts. *Madan.*

Most men look upon their friends, as they do upon their sun-dials; only when the sun shines. *Dyer.*

Friendship is an union of spirits; a marriage, as it were, of hearts; and virtue is the golden hinge on which it turns. *Anon.*

Every thing is within the reach of free grace; but *nothing is within* the reach of free will. *Serl*

In its best estate, free-will was but a weather-cock, which turned at the breath of a serpent's tongue. It made a bankrupt of our father Adam; it pulled down the house, and sold the land, and sent all the children to beg their bread. *Rutherfoord.*

That Saviour, which natural free-will can apprehend, is but a natural Saviour, a Saviour of man's own making: not the Father's Christ; not Jesus, the Son of the Living God; to whom none can come, without the Father's drawing, *John* vi. 44, 46. *Wilcox.*

The opinion of free-will, so cried up by some, will be easily confuted (as it is by scripture) in the heart which has had any spiritual dealings with Jesus Christ, respecting the application of his merits, and subjection to his righteousness. *ibid.*

The full assurance of faith consists in a feeling application to Christ, or taking Christ to myself: being persuaded, that, by God's free gift, Jesus Christ is mine; that I shall surely have life and salvation by him, a life of holiness and a life of happiness; and that whatever Christ did and suffered for the redemption of any one of the human race, he did the same for me; he did and suffered as much for me, as for any soul in all the creation of God. *Ryland.*

The full assurance of faith triumphs over all base suspicions of God's fidelity to his promises. It disdains the vile imagination of God's being fickle in his purposes, or false to his word. Faith meets God in the Bible, eye to eye, and heart to heart. The actings of the believer's soul correspond to the tender and generous actings of God's soul in Scripture-promises. *ibid.*

A believer has not so much to boast of, as a common beggar. He that gives to a beggar, gives him a bare alms only: whereas God gives his people both Christ's righteousness to justify them, and also the hand of faith by which they receive it. *Parr.*

God can give us no greater gift than himself. We may say as one said to Cæsar, "This is too great a gift for me to receive."—"But it is not too great, for me to give," answered Cæsar. Dyer.

Such as do not truly know God, can never sincerely
ım at the glory of God, in what they do. For, what
do not know, I cannot love; what I do not love, I
annot desire; what I do not desire, I can never intend.
ınd, therefore, if I do not know God, I can never in-
nd his glory in my actions: and if I do not intend his
ory in my actions, I sin upon that very account, be-
ıuse I do not intend his glory. *Anon.*

Small Jacob shall arise, *Amos* vii. 5. and that because
ıcob's God is great. *Arrowsmith.*

O God, thou art my sun: the best of creatures are
ıt stars, deriving the lustre, they have, from thee.
id not thy light make day in my heart, I should
nidst all things else, languish in a perpetual night of
ssatisfaction. *ibid.*

God is called a rock, to teach us, that, as this conti-
ıes stedfast and immovable, while the whole sur-
ıunding ocean is in a state of perpetual fluctuation;
, though all the creatures of God, from the lowest to
e very highest of the intelligent kind, are subject to
ıange; capable of new additions, with respect to their
ıowledge, their power, or their blessedness; God
one is absolutely the same, yesterday, to-day, and
r ever. *Venn.*

A Christian cannot say, I have an estate in the
orld, and I shall have it for ever; but every Christian
ay say, I have God for my portion, and I shall have
m for ever. *Anon.*

God brings his grace into the heart by conquest.
ow, as in a conquered city, though some yield and
ıcome true subjects to the conqueror; yet others plot,
ıw they may shake off the yoke: and therefore, the
me power, which won it at first, is requisite to keep

The Christian hath an unregenerate part, which is
scontented at this new, supernatural change in the
ul: so that, if God should not continually reinforce
is his new-planted colony of graces in the heart, the
ry natives (I mean, the corruptions) that are left,
uld come out of their dens and holes, where they

lie lurking, and eat up all the grace, which the holiest person on earth is possest of: it would be as bread to these devourers. *Gurnall.*

From whence come the sweet consolations of grace? What friend sends them in? They are derived, not from my own cistern, nor from any creature. It is my God that hath been here, and left this delightful perfume of comfort behind him in my bosom: my God, who has, unawares to me, filled my sails with the gales of his spirit, and brought me off the flats of my own deadness, where I lay aground. O! it is his sweet spirit that held my head and stayed my heart, in such an affliction, or such a temptation: else, I had sunk away, in a fainting fit of unbelief.—How can this chuse but endear God to a gracious soul. *ibid.*

He, that hath God's heart, shall not want his arm. [Whom God loves, he sustains, protects, and guides.] *ibid.*

The Christian, when fullest of divine communications, is but a glass without a foot: he cannot stand, nor hold what he has received, any longer than he is held in the strong hand of God. *ibid.*

Indwelling grace is, in this life, but weak; like a king in the cradle: which gives advantage to Satan to carry on his plots more strongly, to the disturbance of this young king's reign in the soul. Yea, he would put an end to the war, in the ruin of the believer's grace, did not God take the Christian into his own guardianship and protection. *ibid.*

As a father, when the way is rugged and difficult, gives his child his arm to hold by; so doth God reach forth his almighty power, for his saints to exercise their faith upon. *ibid.*

As when a child travels in his father's company, all is paid for, but the father himself carries the purse; so the expenses of a Christian's warfare and journey to heaven, are paid and discharged for him by the Lord, *in every stage* and condition. Hence, the believer can*not say, this I* did, or that I suffered; but God wrought *all in me and for me.* *ibi*

God himself is the stability of our spiritual strength. Were the stock in our own hands, we should soon prove broken merchants. *ibid.*

Our heavenly Father knows, that we are but leaking vessels; when fullest of grace, we could not hold it long, if left to ourselves; and therefore, to make all sure, he sets us under the streamings-forth of his own strength. *ibid.*

The rock followed the Israelites. Every believer has Christ at his back, following him with strength as he goes, for every condition and trial. *ibid.*

The power of God is that shoulder (Luke xv. 5,) on which Christ carries his sheep home, rejoicing all the way as he goes. The everlasting arms of his strength are those eagle's wings, on which the saints are both tenderly and safely conveyed to glory. *ibid.*

What can we wish for in an heritage, that is not to be found in God? Would we have large possessions? He is immensity. Would we have a sure estate? He is immutability. Would we have a term of long continuance? He is eternity itself. *Arrowsmith.*

God is a portion, of which his people can never be robbed. Impoverished you may be, but not undone; discouraged, but not disinherited. *ibid.*

To suppose God to perform any work, which he did not first design to perform, is to charge him with a degree of folly, and with acting below an intelligent agent. [On the other hand], to suppose him to design to do any thing, which he does not effect, is to tax him with impotence. If it is an instance of the wisdom and power of man, first to design a work, and then to perfect it; the great God, who is infinite in both these perfections, must design what he effects, and effect what he has designed.—If we consider him as infinite in wisdom, and of almighty power, there cannot be a more rational way of arguing, than from his acts to his designs. *Sladen.*

If God hath designed to save any persons, then they *must be saved: otherwise* God must repent, and change *his mind concerning* them; or be overpowered by some

superior agency of theirs. To suppose either of which is not only to degrade, but to deny the divine perfections. *ibid.*

Purposes are actions decreed; actions are purposes executed. As the promises of God are the revelation of his purposes of good will, so the actings of God upon his creatures are the execution of his purposes, and the fulfilment of his promises. *ibid.*

If God is with you, you will want neither company nor comfort. *Rutherfoord.*

Those that with due affection believe stedfastly on Christ for the free gift of all his salvation, may find by experience, that they are carried forth by that faith, according to the measure of its strength or weakness, to love God heartily, because he hath loved them first, to praise him and to pray unto him in the name of Christ. *Marshal.*

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God, *Matth.* v. 8. and without holiness no man shall see God, *Heb.* xii. 14. No gifts, no duties, no natural endowments, will evidence a right in heaven; but the least measure of true holiness will secure heaven to the soul. As holiness is the soul's best evidence for heaven, so it is a continued spring of comfort to it in the way thither. The purest and the sweetest pleasures of this world are the results of holiness. Till we come to live holy, we never live comfortably. Heaven is epitomized in holiness. And, to say no more, it is the peculiar mark by which God hath visibly distinguished his own from other men, *Ps.* iv. 3. the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself. As if he had said, This is the man, and that the woman, to whom I intend to be good for ever: this is a man for me. O holiness, how surpassingly glorious art thou! *Flaval.*

It is matter of wonder men should admit the report and attestation of others concerning the truth and reality of godliness, who yet live strangers to it themselves, yea, should be at some toil and pains, and come at length to be almost Christians, without pursuing this in greater earnest. Fleming

It is often and truly spoken unto, how men may have their minds enlightened, their affections wrought upon, and their lives much changed, and yet come short of true holiness. The best trial of this work is by its universality with respect unto its subject. If any thing remain unsanctified in us, sin may there set up its throne and maintain its sovereignty: but where this work is true and real, however weak and imperfect it may be as unto its degrees, yet it possesseth the whole person, and leaveth not the least hold unto sin, wherein it doth not continually combat and conflict with it. There is saving light in the mind, and life in the will, and love in the affections, and grace in the conscience, suited to its nature: there is nothing in us whereunto the power of holiness doth not reach according to its measure.

Owen.

If we design to be holy, let us constantly in our families, towards our relations, in churches, in our conversations in the world, and dealings with men, all men, towards our enemies and persecutors, the worst of them, towards all mankind as we have opportunity, labour after a conformity unto God, and to express our likeness unto him in this philanthropy, goodness, benignity, condescension, readiness to forgive, help, and relieve; without which we neither are nor can be the children of our Father which is in heaven. *ibid.*

They are said to keep his testimonies who seek him with the whole heart. Set the best saint's hands at work, and they shall fall short in many degrees; but set the heart on work, and it inwardly intends all: it has a will for all. It is impossible by any outward act to do this: with my mind I serve the law of God; but, when I come to put this in act, my good works are infinitely short of what my sincerity aims at; I can never be so holy outwardly as inwardly I would be. This is the nature of sincerity, that it falls in with all the will of God, begs *that every* tittle of the will of God may be *written in the soul* and expressed in the life. Cole.

Is it not strange what a multitude in these times pre

less the truth and yet hate it, and were never drawn with the cords of love! How very many have courted the name of Christian, and have woo'd the shadow of religion, who never knew the truth thereof; which certainly is a convincing evidence of the gospel's conquest, that so many knees shall bow to the name of Jesus whose hearts were never bowed or really subdued by him. *Fleming.*

There never was by any, nor ever can be, any act or duty of true holiness performed, where there was not, in order of nature antecedently, an habit of holiness in the persons by whom they are performed. Many acts and duties, for the substance of them good and approvable, may be performed without it; but no one that hath the proper form and nature of holiness can do so. And the reason is, because every act of true holiness must have something supernatural in it, from an internal, renewed principle of grace: and that which hath not so, be it otherwise what it will, is no act or duty of true holiness. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. 27. "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." The whole of all that actual obedience, and all those duties of holiness which God requireth of us is contained in these expressions; "Ye shall walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments and do them." Antecedent hereunto, and as the principle and cause thereof, God gives a new heart and a new spirit: this new heart is a heart with the law of God written in it; and this new spirit is the habitual inclination of that heart unto the life of God, or all duties of obedience. *Owen.*

Humility in all things is a necessary consequence of a due consideration of God's decree of election. For what were we when he set his heart upon us to chuse us and do us good for ever? Poor, lost, undone creatures, that lay perishing under the guilt of our apostacy *from him.* What did he see in us to move him *to chuse us?* Nothing but sin and misery. What did

he forsee that we would do for ourselves more than others, if he wrought not in us by his effectual grace? Nothing but a continuance in sin and rebellion against him, and that for ever. How should the thoughts hereof keep our souls in all humility and continual self-abasement! For what have we in or from ourselves on the account whereof we should be lifted up? Wherefore, as the elect of God, let us put on humility in all things. And there is no grace whereby at this day we may more glorify God and the gospel, now the world is sinking into ruin under the weight of its own pride. The spirit of men, the looks of men, the tongues of men, are lifted up by their pride unto their destruction. The Good Lord keep professors from a share in the pride of these days! Spiritual pride is foolish self-exalting opinions, and the pride of life in the fashions of the world, are the poison of this age. *Owen.*

An attentive consideration of the Lord Jesus is a most powerful means of sanctification. No where doth it more clearly appear what a vile, filthy thing sin is, than in the lowness, emptiness, and sufferings of Christ. What clothed the Lord of glory with the contemptible form of a servant? What pressed the magnanimous Lion of the tribe of Judah with such great horrors and griefs, as that under them he well-nigh fainted? What stirred up the cruel forces of hell against him? What turned the affluence of divine consolations into most doleful drought? What mingled those most bitter bitternesses in the cup of divine wrath, with which the beloved Son of God was well-nigh exanimated? Certainly sin was the cause of all these, *Isa.* liii. 5. Will not he who thinks of this burn with irreconcileable hatred thereof? Will he not endeavour to take revenge on such an outrageous monster, which so cruelly afflicted his dearest Lord; and which, unless it had been first slain, would have raged with the same cruelty against all those by whom it is *so kindly received?* Will any, who seriously consider *and believes this*, ever bring his mind to give up his

self again a slave to that tyrant, from whose chains, glowing with the fire of hell, he could never have been delivered but by the cursed death of the Son of God? Thus the meditation of the sufferings of Christ maketh us, that, being dead to sin, we should live unto righteousness. *Witsius.*

The sufferings and obedience of Christ afford the highest motives to dissuade from sin and press to holiness, and lay a man under an infinite obligation in point of gratitude to live unto God. That very grace which enables him to believe in Christ, equally inclines him to love God. A formal act of saving faith includes in it a desire of holiness, and purpose of using all proper means to attain it, and by the grace of God to live holy. For it is impossible for a man acting rationally, to go to Christ and his righteousness for a right of pardon and life, without a sincere desire of that life which consists in holiness here as its beginning, and glory in heaven as its consummation. *Glascock.*

Hast thou, O Lord, from eternity had thoughts of glorifying me a poor miserable man, who am less than nothing? and shall not I again always carry thee in my eyes and in my bosom? shall not I be delighted in meditating on thee! shall not I cry out, how precious are thy thoughts also unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! *Ps.* cxxxix. 17. Shall I not be affected with most sincere repentance of that time wherein so many hours, days, weeks, months, and years, have passed me, wherein I never had a holy pleasant thought of thee! Hast thou out of mere love chosen me to salvation, and shall not I again chuse thee for my Lord, my King, my Spouse, the peculiar One of my soul, my chief or rather my only Delight! Hast thou chosen me out of so many others, who being left to themselves, eternal destruction abides them; and shall I not with my utmost endeavour to shine before others *in love, in thy* worship, and all duties of holiness! Hast *thou predestinated* me to holiness, so lovely in itself, *so necessary* for me, as that without it there is no sal-

vation; and shall not I walk therein! Shall I presume so to sophisticate with thee, O thou brightest teacher of truth, that, separating the end from the means, I shall securely promise to myself the end, as being predestinated thereto, in a neglect of the means, to which I am no less predestinated! Is thy purpose concerning my salvation fixed and immovable; and shall I every hour be changed, now for thee, now again giving up my service to Satan! Shall not I rather with so firm purpose adhere to thee, that I should rather suffer a thousand deaths than perfidiously depart from thee! Shall not I stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord! 1 *Cor.* xv. 58. Wilt thou make me assured of thy love, which passeth all understanding; and shall not I again love thee with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my trength! Wilt thou assure me of my salvation; and shall not I, having this hope, purify myself even as thou art pure?

Who, understanding these things, will deny that the doctrine of election supplies to the pious soul plenty of matter for such and the like meditations? and who will deny that in the practice of such meditations lies the very kernel of all holiness and godliness. *Witsius.*

Believers, as they were in the primative times holy in their lives, so they professed this still to be the foundation of their holiness, Christ hath died, Christ is risen, Christ is in heaven: therefore we must live so and so: and this was their great profession. It dasheth all the carnal gospellers in the world. It would shame men out of their sins, or out of their profession of Christ. If Paul were alive, he would spit in any man's face that will say he believes in Christ, that died and rose again, and yet lived in sin. *Goodwin.*

The especial procuring cause of this holiness is the mediation of Christ. We are not in this matter concerned in any thing, let men call it what they please, virtue, holiness, or godliness, that hath not a special *relation to the* Lord Christ and his mediation. *Evangelical holiness* is purchased for us by him as

cording to the tenor of the everlasting covenant, is promised unto us upon his account, actually impetrated for us by his intercession, and communicated to us by his Spirit. And hereby we do not only cast off all the moral virtues of the heathens from having the least concern therein, but all the principles and duties of persons professing christianity, who are not actually really implanted into Christ. For he it is who of God is made unto us sanctification. *Owen.*

God sets the Christian at work, and then meets him in it. *Gurnall.*

It is foolish in us, to muse upon vanity, when we have the love of God to think of; to let the mill grind chaff, when there is such plenty of corn at hand. *Manton.*

Nothing can do us good but the love and favour of God in Christ; and that we shall have, if we can seek it. *Anon.*

Do you ask, why were God's people elected to salvation? Why were they redeemed, why justified, called, preserved, and sanctified? And why they shall all infallibly be glorified? That passage of St. John is an answer to every one of these questions; "God is love." *Madan.*

God's love makes a net for elect souls, which will infallibly catch them and hale them to land. *Boston.*

The heart of God, if I may so speak, is the ocean, the first rise of all love to his saints. Christ is the spring, which first receives from God the Father; and then, through him, is all love diffused to them. All passes through Christ's hands. *Crisp.*

There are, within me, two great gulphs; a mind desirous of more truth, and a will capable of more good, than finite beings can afford. Thou only canst fill me, who art the first truth and the chief good. In thee alone shall my soul be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, while my mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips. *Anon.*

Nothing is more cheerful and pleasing, to eyes that are strong and sound, than light: on the other hand, nothing more painful and disagreeable, to eyes that are weak and distempered. As different is the effect of

God's word, on them that believe, and on them that believe not. *Parr.*

God did not chuse the eagle, or lion, for sacrifice; but the lamb and the dove. *Jenkins.*

God has two thrones: one in the highest heavens, the other in the lowest hearts. *Wright.*

When the Lord doth any great thing, he puts his I to it. I, even I am he, &c. I will make a new covenant, &c. I will write my law in their hearts. I will pardon their sins: I will do them away as a thick cloud. *Wright.*

Our works of obedience, coming immediately out of our hands, would be unfragrant to God: wherefore Christ intercepts them in their passage, and so they are perfumed in the hands of a Mediator. *Manton.*

It is a great mercy to enjoy the gospel of peace; but a greater, to enjoy the peace of the gospel. *Anon.*

All the altars of the law were but so many steps to the cross of the gospel. *ibid.*

Every person, that sits under the sound of the gospel, should ask himself these three questions: "Do I know any thing of the excellency of the gospel?—Do I feel the power of it?—And, do I live according to the rules of it?" *Fanch.*

The gospel is a box of most precious ointment; by preaching it, the box is broken and the fragrance diffused. *Romaine.*

It is a difficult thing for us, to keep the doctrines of the gospel always in view; and harder still to make use of them, and live up to them, when we want them most. *Gill.*

The gospel is a sovereign plaister; but Christ's own hand must make it stick. *Manton.*

It is the peculiar glory of gospel-grace, to humble every believer in the dust, to fill him with the most dreadful apprehensions of sin; to raise him from his dead state; to establish him in the truth of obedience, from a root of thankfulness and love to God, from holy ad-

miration of his perfections, and from an earnest desire to be partaker of his blessedness. *Venn.*

Saving grace is a portion that can never be spent, or run out. The more we live upon it, and the more use we make of it, the greater are our abundance, comfort, and enjoyment. *Walker.*

Grace is not effectual, because free-will willeth; but free-will willeth, because grace is effectual. *Parr.*

A man may as truly say, that the sea burns, or fire cools, as free grace and mercy can make a real believer do wickedly. *Brooks.*

The doctrine of grace may be abused; but the principle cannot. *Owen.*

A penitent, though formerly as bad as the worst of men, may, by grace, become as good as the best. *Bunyan.*

Great grace, and small gifts, are better than great gifts and no grace. It doth not say, "The Lord gives gifts and glory;" but, "The Lord gives grace and glory." Blessed is such an one, to whom the Lord gives grace; for that is a certain forerunner of glory. *ibid.*

If grace were [the sole] ministerial qualification, all the Lord's people would be, what Moses wished they were, even all of them, prophets.

God, who enables sinners to thirst after grace, will surely give them the grace they thirst after. *Arrowsmith.*

Nothing but free grace makes any difference between me and the devil. *Wright.*

Either exercise thy graces, or Satan will exercise thy corruptions: as one bucket descends, the other rises. *Gurnall.*

Little grace cannot die. It is immortal, because a child of God's everlasting covenant and promise. *ibid.*

True grace, when weakest, is stronger than false, when strongest. *ibid.*

Grace is of a stirring nature; and not a dead thing *(like an image)* which you may lock up in a chest, and

no-body know what God you worship. No; grace will shew itself; it will walk with you, and talk by you, in all places and companies: it will buy with you, and sell with you, and have an hand in all your enterprises. It is too much alive, to be smothered. *ibid.*

There is not a round in the ladder to heaven, which does not give every one that steppeth upon it, just occasion to sing, grace, grace! *Arrowsmith.*

When God overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, it overwhelmed and drowned the greatest Egyptian commanders, no less than the meanest foot soldier. The vast ocean overflows the lowest sands, and the highest rocks. So does pardoning grace cover every transgression of every penitent believer. *ibid.*

As when we see a flame, we know there is fire, though perhaps, we know not how nor when it began; so the truth of grace in us may be discerned, though we know not how or when, it was dropt into our hearts. *Boston.*

As seed virtually contains in it all that afterwards proceeds from it, the blade, stalk, ear, and full corn in the ear; so the first principle of grace, implanted in the heart, seminally contains all the grace which afterwards appears, and all the fruits, effects, acts, and exercises of it. *Gill.*

Be not afraid for little grace. Christ soweth his living seed, and he will not lose it. If he have the guiding of my stock and state, it shall not miscarry. Our spilt works, losses, deadness, coldness, wretchedness, are the ground which our good husbandman laboureth. *Rutherfoord.*

Happy are they, who are withheld from sin, not merely (as the unregenerate are) by God's restraining power; but (as the saints are) by God's restraining grace! *Southgate.*

Grace is the silver link that draws the golden link of glory after it. *Dyer*

As paper *receives*, from the press, letter for letter; *as the wax receives*, from the seal, print for print; or

as the glass receives face for face; so do believers receive, from Christ, grace for grace: i. e. for every grace that is in him, there is a measure of the same in them. *ibid.*

Men dote upon establishing a righteousness of their own to bring them to Christ; and think it is presumptuous, or licentious doctrine, that Christ may be theirs, and they receive him, considered simply as ungodly and as enemies. But such are abominably injurious to the faith of Jesus Christ, and to the exceeding bounty of his grace; which saves from sin, without respect of any thing in the creature, that he himself might have the praise of the glory of his own grace. *Crisp.*

Grace, properly so called, is nothing else but God's mere favour and bounty, and loving-kindness itself. Consequently, sanctification is not so properly grace itself, as the fruit of grace. God first casts his favour and loving-kindness upon a person; and then, out of his favour, issue the several fruits of his loving-kindness: which fruits, are those fruits of the spirit, frequently mentioned by the apostle. *ibid.*

God neither looks to any thing in the creature, to win him to shew kindness; nor yet any thing in the creature to debar him: neither righteousness in men, that persuades God to pardon sin; nor unrighteousness in men, that hinders him from giving this pardon, and acquitting them from their transgressions. It is only and simply for his own sake, that he pardons men. *ibid.*

The sanctifying principle of grace in the heart, may be compared to a candle in a lanthorn; which transmits its light through the lanthorn, though, in and of itself, the lanthorn still continues (what it was before) a dark body. *Huntingdon.*

I know no sweeter way to heaven, than through free grace and hard trials together. And, where grace is, hard trials are seldom wanting. *Anon.*

Grace, embellished with gifts, is the more beautiful; *but gifts, without* grace, are only a richer spoil for Satan. *ibid.*

As some believers exercise grace, more than others; so in the prophane world, there are greater traders in sin, than others: who return more wrath in a day, than others in a month. *Gurnall.*

He that hath clothes will surely wear them, and not be seen naked. Men talk of their faith, repentance, and love to God: these are precious graces; but why do not such persons let us see those graces walking abroad in their daily conversation? Surely, if such guests were in thy soul, they would look out sometimes at the windows, and be seen abroad in this duty, or in that holy action.

Grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant; grace is glory begun, glory is grace made perfect; grace is the first degree of glory; glory is the highest degree of grace. *Dyer.*

The actings of gratitude to God, are not only fruitful in every good work, but productive of the truest satisfaction. Somewhat like the fragrant steams of consecrated incense; which, while they honoured the great object of worship, regaled with their pleasing perfumes, the devout worshipper. *Hervey.*

There is a vileness in the bodies even of the saints (*Phil.* iii. 21.) which will never be removed, until it be melted down in the grave, and cast into a new mould, at the resurrection to come forth a spiritual body. *Boston.*

[Christian grief is not forbidden.] Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. Joseph made a mourning for his father, seven days. The children of Israel wept for Moses, in the plains of Moab, thirty days. David lamented the deaths of Saul, Jonathan, and Abner. Christ wept over the grave of Lazarus. Devout men, who carried Stephen to his burial, made great lamentation over him. And the apostle Paul signifies, concerning his friend Epaphroditus, who had been sick nigh unto death, that, if the Lord had not had *mercy on him, he* should have had sorrow upon sorrow. Gill

On earth, God's people have their respective homes, and particular places of residence: but, when we come to heaven, one home shall hold us all. *Holmes.*

Ever carry self-loathing about thee; and regard thyself as one fit to be trampled on by all saints.

Saints increase in humility, as they draw nearer to heaven. Unworthy to be called an apostle, said Paul, concerning himself, some years after his conversion.—As he advanced still farther in years, he cried out, less than the least of all saints.—A little before his martyrdom, his cry is, the chief of sinners. *Watts.*

As soon as pride is humbled enough, not to enter into controversy with God about the justice of his own declarations; every man confesses himself a guilty sinner, in danger of eternal ruin. *Venn.*

The nettle mounteth on high; while the violet shrowds itself under its own leaves, and is chiefly found out by its fragrancy. Let Christians be satisfied with the honour that cometh from God only. *Manton.*

Generally speaking, those that have the most grace and the greatest gifts, and are of the greatest usefulness, are the most humble, and think the most meanly of themselves. So those boughs and branches of trees, which are most richly laden with fruit, bend downwards, and hang lowest. *Gill.*

Joseph was alive, though his coat was brought bloody to Jacob: and so are the sins of a hypocrite, after all his mortified looks in duty, and all his outcries against iniquity. *Gurnall.*

In addresses from man to man, hypocrisy is detestable: how much more, in addresses from man to God! *Venn.*

Woe is me, that the holy profession of Christ is made a stage-garmant, by many, to bring home a vain fame; and Christ is made to serve men's ends: which is, as it were, to stop an oven with a king's robes. *Rutherfoord.*

That which is now our idol, may quickly become our burden, and we know not how soon we may be sick of what we were lately sick for. Henry.

"All the prayings, teachings, and actings of men," saith Luther, "are, out of Christ, idolatry and sin, in the sight of God." *Arrowsmith.*

Ignorance of the purity of God, of the extent and spirituality of his law, and of the total depravation of their own hearts, is that which makes any persons commence Arians or Socinians. Were they duly convinced of sin, they would need no other arguments to convince them that the Saviour, whose blood is able to expiate its guilt, is and must be very God. *Haweis.*

Quantum est quod nescimus! says the learned Gilb. Voetius. "How exceeding much is there, of which we know nothing at all!" *Arrowsmith.*

As great men are sometimes wont to erect stately buildings, and then cause their own picture to be fixed up in the principal apartments; so, when God had made the fabric of the world, the last thing he did was to set up his own picture in it, by forming man after his own blessed image and likeness.

The elect when converted, are living images of God: but not in that high, strict, and peculiar sense, in which Christ is so called, *Col.* i. 15. *Heb.* i. 3. The king's image is on his coin, and in his son; but after a different manner. On his coin, there may be likeness and derivation; but not identity of nature. In the saints, are the two former: in Christ, are all three.

There will be mistakes in divinity, while men preach, and errors in government, while men govern. *Chorleton.*

The more we know of God, the more we shall desire to resemble him in holiness. Whoever truly loves another, will desire to be like the person he loves, and to do what that person likes. *Madan.*

A soul, impatient under affliction, is like the devil in his chains, who rages against God while he is fettered by him.

God will confound the language of those sons of pride, who cry up the *powers* of nature; as if man, with the *slime of his own* freewill, and the bricks of his own self-

righteousness, was able to rear up a building whose top might reach to heaven itself. *Gurnall.*

Mankind lie covered beneath the ruins of their lapsed state, and no more able to raise themselves from under their weight of guilt, than one, buried under the ponderous rubbish of a fallen house, is able to free himself. The holy spirit finds sinners in as helpless a condition, as unable to repent, or believe on Christ for salvation, as they were to purchase it. *ibid.*

By nature, man is utterly void of all strength and ability of doing any thing, of himself, towards his own salvation.

If a ship, launched, rigged, and with her sails spread, cannot stir until the wind come fair: much less can the timber, that lies in the carpenter's yard, hew and frame itself into a ship.

If a living tree cannot grow but by a communication of sap from the root; much less can a dead stake in the hedge, which has no root nor vegetating principle, live of its own accord.

In a word, If a Christian, who hath the spiritual life of grace in him from God, cannot even exercise that life, without the continual influx of strength from above; then, surely, one, void of this new life, and dead in trespasses and sins, can never be able to beget grace in himself, or concur in the production of it. *ibid.*

Though the righteousness of a man's person can never make a bad action good; yet the wickedness of a man's person doth always make a good action bad: and therefore, though a good man may do a bad act, yet a bad [i. e. an unregenerate] man can never do a [spiritually] good act [and such as is pleasing to God]. *Beveridge.*

After our creation, and before our corruption, we had power to do every thing pleasing unto God: but, after our corruption, and before our regeneration, we have power to do nothing pleasing to him. *ibid.*

Did Christ die, and shall sin live? Was he crucified *in the world*, and shall our affections to the world be *quick and lively*? O, where is the spirit of him, who,

by the cross of Christ, was crucified to the world, and the world to him? *Owen.*

Be not ashamed because of your guiltiness. Necessity should not blush to beg. Your are in the utmost want of Christ: therefore, knock and cry. *Rutherfoord.*

O believer, what matters it, if God denies thee a kid to make merry; when he says, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine?" Hath a son any cause to complain that his father denies him a flower in the garden, when he makes him heir of his whole estate? *Anon.*

For these six thousand years, God has been multiplying pardons, and yet free grace is not tired.—Christ undertook to satisfy, and he hath money enough to pay. It were folly, to think, that an emperor's revenue will not pay a beggar's debt. Mercy is an ocean, ever flowing, yet ever full. The saints carry loads of experiences with them to heaven. Free grace can shew you large accounts, and a long bill, cancelled by the blood of Christ. *Manton.*

Penitent sinners are then said to buy the wine and milk of spiritual comforts without money and without price, when, being conscious that they have nothing of their own to answer divine justice with, nothing of their own, wherewith to fetch in pardon, peace, and righteousness; they wholly disclaim all self-sufficiency, and come to Christ, as to one that expects not to receive any thing from them, but to be himself received by them. All that he looks for from us, at our coming to him by faith is, that we be nothing in ourselves, but desirous to have all from him; and to partake of his fullness, grace for grace. *Arrowsmith.*

When you desire, and in earnest endeavour, to live obedient to the spiritual commandments of God, without which, a course of external religion is vain; you will immediately feel your own impotency, just as Samson did the loss of his strength, when he was rising to combat the Philistines. Venn.

The world is glorious without, but the Church is glo-

rious within: it's splendor lieth not in large possessions and great revenues, but in a plentiful effusion of gifts and graces. *Manton.*

All the conditions of the new covenant are fulfilled by Christ. Come, then, and partake of the heavenly blessings, as you partake of a marriage feast, when the entertainment is all prepared, and the bridegroom bids you welcome. *Hervey.*

Self-jealousy well becomes Christians. Lord, is it I? They, that know the deceit of their bow, will not be very confident that they shall hit the mark.

Some have written to me, that I am, possibly, too joyful in the cross which God hath laid upon me. But my joy overleapeth the cross, and terminates on Christ himself. *Rutherfoord.*

Pearls are not gotten, but from the bottom of the water; and gold is digged, not from the surface, but from the deep entrails of the earth. So the joy of God is not to be found, but in the inward recesses of a broken and contrite spirit. *Cowper.*

The saints enter into God's own joy, *Matt.* xxv. 21. They have not only the joy, which God bestows, but the joy which God himself enjoys. *Cripplegate Lectures.*

The common proverb is most certainly true, in a spiritual sense; "Some men for joy do weep, others for sorrow sing." Believers weep for joy, and never mourn more kindly, than when they taste the joy of the Holy Ghost, in the freeness and fulness of the Lord Christ, poured out upon them. There is never a more kindly mourning for sin, than when the soul is satisfied of forgiveness. *Crisp.*

There is more joy, in the penitential mournings of a believer, than in all the mirth of a wicked man. I appeal to you, that have had melted hearts, whether you have not found a secret content and sweetness in your mourning? So far from wishing to be rid of your meltings, you rather fear the removal of them. *ibid.*

Justification is an act of God's free grace, whereby he *clears his people* from sin, discharges them from con-

demnation, and reckons and accounts them righteous, for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which he has accepted of, and imputes unto them. *Gill.*

Justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, is the centre arch of that bridge, by which we pass out of time into a blissful eternity. *Ryland.*

Sagacity and knowledge are then only truly useful, when joined with grace, meekness, discretion, and benevolence. The serpent's eye does best in the dove's head. *Gurnall.*

Knowledge of gospel doctrines is the candle, without which faith cannot see to do it's work. *ibid.*

Moses was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians: yet, not content herewith, he became an humble suiter to God for more and better knowledge than that: "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." Other notions may fill the head of a moral man: nothing short of the knowledge of God can satisfy the heart of a saint. Wherefore, in answer to this request, the Lord gave him a promise saying, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." *Arrowsmith.*

Learning, in religious persons, like the gold that was in the Israelites' ear-rings, is a most precious ornament: but, if men pervert it to base ends, or begin to make an idol of it (as they did a golden calf, of their ear-rings) it then becomes an abomination. *ibid.*

Knowledge and good parts, under the management of grace, are, like the rod in Moses's hand, wonder-workers; but turn to serpents, when they are cast upon the ground and employed in promoting earthly designs. *ibid.*

Know your guilt and weakness, your desert and danger; think what you are bound to by the law, [even sinless obedience, from the first to the last moment of your life], and what you have to trust to, if left under it's [condemning] power, [even everlasting punishment]; then view the loving kindness of God in giving his Son to fulfil all righteousness [in our stead], and then tell me, *if it be possible, [while under the lively sense of his mercy], to sin against so much goodness?* *ibid.*

By ignorance of the law, even that virtuous character, which has, perhaps, gained you much esteem among men, will prove a greater obstacle in the way of your salvation, than [even] gross and long-indulged sins prove to others: since these last carry with them their own [glaring, palpable] condemnation; they have a tendency, on the first lucid interval of consideration, to excite strong confessions of guilt, and cries for mercy. Whereas, a behaviour, more regulated, in externals, by the commands of God, when the law is not understood, does but administer fuel to self-sufficiency and self-applause. *ibid.*

The life of God in us consists in conformity to Christ; nor is the Holy Spirit, as the principal and efficient cause of it given to us for any other end but to unite us to Him and make us like him! Wherefore the original gospel duty, which animates and rectifies all others, is a design for conformity to Christ in all the gracious principles and qualifications of his holy soul, wherein the image of God in him doth consist. His meekness, lowliness of mind, condescension unto all sorts of persons, his love and kindness to mankind, his readiness to do good to all, with patience and forbearance, are continually set before us in his example. With respect unto them it is required, that the same mind be in us, that was in Christ Jesus, and that we walk in love, as he also loved us. *Owen.*

Nothing less than the entire renovation of the image of God in our souls will constitute us evangelically holy. No series of obediential actings, no observance of religious duties, no attendance unto actions among men as morally virtuous and useful, how exact soever they may be, or how constant soever we may be unto them, will ever render us lovely or holy in the sight of God, unless they all proceed from the renovation of the image of God in us, or that habitual principle of spiritual life and power which renders us conformable unto him. *ibid.*

Morality is not grace; because it doth not change our

ture: if it did, many of the heathen were as near to God as the best of Christians. Whatever may be done by the strength of nature cannot alter it; for no nature can change itself. Poison may be great within the skin, like a viper's. Be we never so speckled with a reformation, freedom from gross sins argues not a friendship for God. None were ever so great enemies to Christ as the Pharisees, to whom Christ gave no better title than that of the devil's children, and charges them with hatred both of himself and Father.

Charnock.

There is nothing man does more affect in the world than a self-sufficiency, and an independency on any other power than his own. This temper is as much riveted in his nature as any other false principle whatever: for man does derive it from his first parents, as the prime legacy bequeathed to his nature; for it was the first thing discovered in man at his fall: he would be as God, independent on him. Now God, to cross this principle, suffers his elect to lie in the grave till they stink, like Lazarus, that there may be no excuse to ascribe their resurrection to their own power. God lets men run so far in sin, that they do unman themselves, that he may proclaim to all the world that we are unable to do any thing of ourselves towards our recovery, without a superior principle. To turn to God in ways of righteousness is contrary to the stream of corrupt nature; and therefore it must be overpowered by a flood of almighty grace, as the stream of the river is by the tide of the sea. Therefore, when you see a man cast away his pleasures, deprive himself of those contentments to which his soul was once knit, and walk in paths contrary to corrupt nature, you may search for the cause any where rather than in nature itself. *ibid.*

We believe this day the resurrection of the dead, and an undoubted accomplishment of that truth which to natural reason would seem a strange contradiction. But *should we not* consider that the same truth, though *in a spiritual way*, yet most visibly and upon a higher

account, is verified before our eyes; how it is sure, such are quickened and brought to life who were dead in their sins, were past feeling, yea, for many years have lain as in a cold grave, without sense of God or their own case, who in one moment, at the voice of the word, have been made to stir and arise! And is not this something as discernibly above nature, or the influence of second causes, yea, as marvellous an act of divine power as the resurrection of the dead in the last day, which seems to some such a dark and strange thing to believe? *Fleming.*

It is the peculiar work of the spirit to open the eyes and enlighten the soul by an effective illumination, and discover to us the evidence of divine truths; nor can the proposal of the object with the greatest certainty of evidence, or by moral reason, cause men to discern spiritual things spiritually; since there must be a supernatural light, and suiting of the visive faculty to the object. *ibid.*

God's creating power drew the world out of nothing, but his converting power frames the new creature out of something worse than nothing. What power must that be which can stop the tide of the sea, and make it suddenly recoil back? What a vast power must that be that can change a black cloud into a glorious sun? This and more doth God do in conversion; he doth not only take smooth pieces of the softest matter, but the ruggedest timber, full of knots, to plane, and shew his strength and art upon. It is not so great a work to raise many thousands killed in battle as to gospelize one dead soul. *Charnock.*

We are indeed bidden to compel men to come in; but, unless there be another compeller, that is, except there be the Spirit within to do it, the work is not done: unless there be two compellers at the same time, the Holy Ghost preaching within to your hearts when we preach to your ears; except there be two callers, that, *when we call men*, the Lord sends his Spirit to call you *too; it is in vain.* For you must know, that it is as

ard a thing to move a man to leave his pleasures and livers lusts, and vain conversation, as to turn the whole course of nature. Now, unless there be an almighty power to turn this course of nature, no man will ever come to Christ. A man may as well say, I will make a clod of earth a shining star, as to say he can make the carnal and dead heart of man like the image of God. It must be the Spirit of God himself that must do it; it is a work above nature. *Preston.*

The most refined and ingenious sort of unregenerate men have nothing in them which is more excellent than common grace; and common grace leaves them in a state of nature, under the power of sin, and in the very suburbs of hell, wholly at the command of Satan. And if any man think otherwise, let him take heed that very thought doth not nail him fast to that unregenerate and cursed state for evermore. *Chen[illegible].*

To a perfect and proper knowledge of supernatural things the revelation of the object is not sufficient, [illegible] due use of reason in the subject; but moreover there is required the grace of Christ, and the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, whereby the heart may be opened and softened, and a spiritual taste and sense given, suited to the true sweetness of supernatural truths. *Re[illegible]*

Heavenly things exceed the reach of reason, for they are above right reason: they are contrary to the wisdom of the flesh, for they are against depraved nature. Nature stands in need of grace, that the faculties may be rightly disposed to receive supernatural objects; and grace uses nature, that by the clearness of the mind, the perspicuity in the judgment, and the light of good learning, the progress of the study of the Holy Scriptures may be more successful. *ibid.*

The least spark of saving, regenerating grace is wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost, as given unto men to dwell in them and to abide with them. He is the water given by Jesus Christ unto believers, which is *in them a well of water* springing up to everlasting life,

John iv. 14. First they receive the water, the spring itself, that is the Holy Spirit, and from thence living waters do arise up in them; they are wrought, effected, produced by the Spirit which is given to them, *Ezek.* xi. 19. The least of saving grace such as is peculiar to them that are regenerate, is spirit, *John* iii. 6. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit; whatever it is that is so born, it is spirit: it hath a spiritual being, and it is not educible by any means out of the principles of nature. So, *Cor.* v. 17. it is said to be a new creature. Be it never so little or so great, however it may differ in degree in one and in another, yet the nature of it is the same in all: it is a new creature. As the least worm of the earth, in the order of the old creation, is as much a creature as the sun, yea, or the most glorious angel of heaven; so, in the order of the new creation, the least spark or dram of true grace, that is from the sanctifying Spirit, is a new creature, no less than the highest faith or love that ever were in the chiefest of the apostles. Now that which is spirit, and that which is not spirit, that which hath a new spiritual being, and that which hath none, whatever appearance there may be among them, yet they differ specifically from one another: and thus it is with the saving grace that is in a regenerate man, and those common graces which are in others that are not so. *Owen.*

Such as have passed the new birth must know a spiritual and new life, with which they were not born, and is from no natural cause, but formed and wrought within by the Spirit, whereof there is a certain and undeniable demonstration as they are sure they breathe and have a natural life: a life that hath its peculiar operations and vital acts, put forth in its breathings, delights, and desires, in a near converse with the Lord, as truly as any acts of his natural life; with those sensible languishings and overcloudings thereof, as well as enjoyments and pleasures proper to its own nature, as *the influence* and breathings of the Spirit of the Lord *are let forth* or restrained. It is sure, nothing can be

more expressly shewed than this from the whole Scriptures, and how it follows on an union with Jesus Christ, in whom it is hid. *Fleming.*

All zealous, devout people in a natural religion are enemies to the gospel. By natural religion I mean that which is the product of the remnent of God's image in fallen man, a little improved by the light of God's word. All such cannot endure to hear that God's law must be perfectly fulfilled in every tittle of it, or no man can be saved by doing: that they must all perish for ever who have not the righteousness of a man who never sinned, who is also God over all, blessed for ever, to shelter and cover them from a holy God's anger, and to render them accepted of him: that his righteousness is put on by the grace of God, and a man must take himself to it, and receive it as a naked, blushing sinner: that no man can do any thing that is good till gospel renew him, and make him first a good man. This they never will receive; but do still think a man may grow good by doing good. *Trail.*

If a man who had been scorched in hell should again enjoy his wonted pleasures, and have all the while a fresh remembrance of his late torments, were not his will changed by powerful grace, he would stand it out as stiffly against God as ever, notwithstanding those terrible marks of wrath, and be without a holy fear of that justice which he had felt. *Charnock.*

What is the reason carnal men leave Christ for the pleasures of the world? Because the pleasures of the world are real things to them. Therefore, unless God make the things of another world real too, a man will never leave realities for notions. All that reason or notions can represent of Christ will never take a man's heart off from the real things he sees here below; and therefore God comes and weighs down the reality of the things of this world by the reality of the things of the *other world.* Goodwin.

You may as soon wash a blackmoor white, as cleanse

a defiled conscience by duties, ordinances, and moral endeavours, without Christ: yea, they will but make thee worse; for the Lord will not bless them, when carnally trusted to and rested in, without Christ. *Mather.*

To say that we have a sufficiency in ourselves so much as to think a good thought, to do any thing as we ought, any power, any ability that is our own, or in us by nature, however externally excited and guided by motives, directions, reasons, encouragements of what sort soever, to believe or obey the gospel savingly in any one instance, is to overthrow the gospel, and the faith of the catholic church in all ages. *Owen.*

As for me I find more solid truth in that one scripture, which tells us that "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," *Jer.* xvii. 9. than in many volumes of idle antiscriptural notions, reared up on the subtile arguings of men, whose eyes have never been opened to see the plague of their own hearts, and who therefore run out in asserting such an ability and power, and inclination to do good in man, as neither scripture, nor the experience of such as have their eyes in the least measure opened, admits of. However, if others will think that there are in them such good inclinations, I will quit my part in them. Woful experience convinces me, and obliges me to acknowledge to my own shame, that I never looked towards the Lord's way, save when he drew me. "I was a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." I never went longer in it than the force lasted; I inclined to sit down, and sat indeed down at every step; no great sign I had my heart to the way! I never got up again, but when my Lord's power was of new put forth. I all this while never went one step but with a grudge; I frequently looked back to Sodom; I have been as a backsliding heifer; I was grieved for what I left behind: my heart clove to what my light had the greatest opposition to. Thus I was of them that rebel against light. I often refused where the *command* was plainest. When I was brought into a *strait, I betook* myself rather to any shift than to Christ.

Sin bit me, and yet I loved it: my heart deceived me often, and yet I trusted in it rather than in God. God dealt with me in a way of kindness; but when he spake to me in my prosperity I would not hear: he smote me, and I went on frowardly: I never parted with any sin till God beat me and drove me from it, and hedged in my way. Surely this looks like the heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. *Halyburton.*

For any to say that the will to believe is not purchased by Christ, and effectually applied by him, but depends on something to be done by men, is a great derogation to the merit of his sufferings. It is, in effect, to steal a jewel from our Sovereign's crown, and to wreath it on a fool's cap. *Cole.*

Seeking a pure life without a pure nature is building without a foundation: and no seeking a new nature from the law; for it bids make bricks without straw, and saith to the cripple, walk, without giving any strength. *Marshal.*

Whatever we do of ourselves, in answer to our convictions, is a covering, not a cleansing: and if we die in this condition, unwashed, uncleansed, unpurified, it is utterly impossible that ever we should be admitted into the blessed presence of the holy God, *Rev.* xxi. 27. Let no man deceive you with vain words. It is not the doing a few good works, it is not an outward profession of religion, that will give you an access with joy unto God. Shame will cover you when it will be too late. Unless you are washed by the Spirit of God, and in the blood of Christ, from the polutions of your natures, you shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10, 11. Yea, you will be an horrid spectacle unto saints and angels, yea, to yourselves, to one another, when the shame of your nakedness shall be made to appear. If therefore you would not perish, and that eternally; if you would not perish as base, defiled creatures, *an abhorring* unto all flesh, then, when your pride, *and your wealth,* and your beauty, and your ornaments

and your duties, will stand you in no stead; look out betimes after that only way of purifying and cleansing your souls which God hath ordained. *Owen.*

By raising any soul from a death in sin, God doth evidence the particular value of Christ's blood for that soul; as he did, in raising Christ, evidence the general fullness of that satisfaction. And this he will do, even to the end of the world. All his grace in all ages, even to the end of the world, shall run through this channel, to put credit and honour upon Christ. Now, the greater the sin is that is to pardon, and the greater the sinner is that is converted, the more it shews the sufficiency of the price Christ paid. *Charnock*

To go and venture upon God, upon the freedom of his grace, upon the promises of God, upon the commands of God, and to stand at God's arbiterment, and to refer a man's will to his will, and to cast a man's self into those everlasting arms, it is as if a man should leave his own standing, and cast himself into the arms of a mighty giant that stands upon another pinacle; one whom he has also often wronged and abused; and he himself hath no hands to lay upon him neither, but he must depend upon his catching him: here is the greatest venture, the greatest trust, the greatest self-denial that can be. Thus the heart throws itself out of all possibilities, and submits to the free-grace of God in Christ: and this is done in believing. *Goodwin.*

By nature a man loadeth himself with a world of vanities; he is shipped for this world: and that is it which his eye aimeth at, to make himself happy in the world in something or other. Now, my brethren, God meets him in the way, takes him off from all the ends that were for himself, putteth in a new pilot, setteth up a new load-star, giveth him a new compass; sendeth his blissed Spirit into his heart, that, as a wind, bloweth him clean another way: all the lading he hath by nature, he throweth them all clean overboard. Thus *God dealeth* with a man when he turneth him, Eph. ii. 13. *Phil.* iii 7, 8. *Hos.* xiv. 3. Paul was a ship richly

laden. I was a scholar, saith he, and profited in the Jewish language more than all my teachers: I had much to boast of. God comes and he throws them all overboard. I count all things but as dross and dung in comparison of the knowledge of Christ. What made Paul do this? God had touched his heart with his loadstone, to the direction of which all must be conformed; and now, saith he, I must needs aim at God's glory in all things: herein lieth the work of conversion. Now to work such a work as this in a man, to touch a man's heart thus, is as much as to throw the earth off its centre. If you should see the earth go off its centre, and fix itself in the same sphere with the sun, and go along with the same pace and with the same motion, you would think an almighty power must go to do all this. This God doth. If a man moveth himself, though it be to God, as self-love will sometimes do, yet still he is upon his own centre; all is for himself. God cometh and turneth him off his own hinges, takes him off from his own bottom, placeth him in the same sphere with himself, makes him aim at him in all things. This is holiness: and to put this principle into a man's heart, nothing but the almighty power of God can do it: it is above all the creation. *ibid.*

All unregenerate persons, whether Jews or Gentiles, will have a fling at the gospel; it is contrary to them, and they are contrary to it; they cannot reach the mystery of it, and therefore do slight and contemn it. But all who are effectually called, and savingly enlightened, do highly prize it: they see much of the power and wisdom of God in this excellent contrivance of man's salvation by Christ; they desire to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified. *Cole.*

The reason of an unregenerate man's unwillingness to holy duties lies in this, that they are appointed, and the tendency of them is, to bring God and their hearts together; which is indeed to bring two enemies together; for such are their hearts and God. And the reason of a regenerate man's willingness is, that in the du

ty two friends meet together; God, who hath from everlasting owned the soul, and the soul who hath chosen God to be his God. *Goodwin.*

It is a great concern to know that the scripture hath such a witness as experience, and that there is such a trade and correspondence as this betwixt the saints and the word, which lieth not in the common road of the world. O what an empty thing would religion be, if it had not this word experience in its grammar; that secret and sure mark whereby the Christian knoweth the scripture is of God; how thus the Lord hath often sealed their instruction in a dark plunge! *John* iv. 42. O what an excellent interpreter is experience; Taste and see! for thus the serious Christian getteth a view of the scripture and spiritual things, which the most subtile and piercing eye of unsanctified schoolmen cannot reach, *Ps.* xxxiv. 10. 2 *Tim.* i. 12. 1 *Pet.* ii. 3. *Gal.* ii. 16. *Heb.* iv. 3. But O! this cannot be found in books; men will not meet with it in a throng of choicest notions: it confoundeth the wise and disputer of this world; while the meanest and most simple Christian often knoweth more than those of greatest parts. *Fleming.*

Doth not this argument of experience, by a very clear demonstration, witness that great truth of a Godhead, whereon the whole superstructure of truth and godliness doth stand? yea, in another manner doth enforce to men the persuasion of this by a more near and convincing discovery than the great works of God, or those glorious appearances of his power and wisdom in the heavens and earth do? It is true, these bring him near to our eyes and ears: but O! this brings the blessed and invisible God nearer, into the heart and soul, that we may both taste and see that surely, he is, and is that which in the scripture he is declared to be. It is not the contemplation of nature, in its highest flight, can answer such an assault of the devil, which may overtake the most established Christian about the being of God. But there is a demonstration within,

which goes farther than the judgment, and passeth natural understanding; whence we feel, we taste, we enjoy; yea, his voice is heard in the soul, which we surely know to be his. *ibid.*

There is nothing of more certainty to the souls of any than what they have real spiritual experience of. When the things about which men are conversant lie only in notions, and are rationally discoursed or debated, much deceit may lie under all: but, when the things between God and the soul come to be realized by practical experience they give a never-failing certainty of themselves. *Owen.*

When the heart is cast indeed into the mould of the doctrine that the mind embraceth, when the evidence and necessity of the truth abides in us, when not only the sense of the words is in our heads, but the sense of the things abides in our hearts, when we have communion with God in the doctrines we contend for, then shall we be garrisoned by the grace of God against all the assaults of men; and without this, all our contending is, as to ourselves, of no value. What am I the better, if I can dispute that Christ is God, but have no sense or sweetness in my heart from hence, that he is a God in covenant with my soul? What will it avail me to have evidence by testimonies and arguments, that he hath made satisfaction for sin, if through my unbelief the wrath of God abides upon me, and I have no experience of my own being made the righteousness of God in him; if I find not, in my standing before God, the excellency of having my sins imputed to him, and his righteousness imputed to me? Will it be any advantage to me in the issue, to profess and dispute that God works the conversion of a sinner by the irresistable grace of his Spirit, if I was never acquainted experimentally with the deadness and utter impotence to good, that opposition to the law of God which is in my soul by nature, with the efficacy of the exceeding greatness of the power of God, in quickening, enlightening, and *bringing* forth the fruits of obedience in me?

Rev. iii. 1. 1 *Cor.* i. 24. ii. 5. It is the power of the truth in the heart alone that will make us cleave unto it indeed in the hour of temptation. Let us not then think that we are any thing the better for our conviction of the truths of the great doctrines of the gospel, for which we contend, unless we find the power of the truths abiding in our hearts, and have a continual experience of their necessity and excellency in our standing before God, and our union with him.

ibid.

Experience is indeed a strong demonstration, and it is such a witness as leaves no room for debate; for here the truth is felt, proved, and acted on the heart, which the Christian knoweth well, and is as sure of, as he is persuaded that he liveth, or that the sun, when it shineth, hath life and warmness therewith. It is true, the world liveth at a great distance with this; they only converse with the sound of such a thing: and we know the naked theory of scripture-truth hath but a short reach, and that it differs as far from that which a serious practical Christian hath, as the sight of a country in a map is from the real discovery of the same; where the difference is not in the degree, but in the kind. *Fleming.*

Consider with thyself, when thou comest to die, what wilt thou say then? Satan will comethen and lay thy sins to thy charge. Thou must think what thou hast to answer. Thou hast nothing to say but, I am in Christ. Well; but how dost thou prove that? He will ask thee that question, Art thou a new creature? If thou findest that thou art not a new creature, thou art not in Christ; and thou needest not a new condemnation, thou art condemned already, *John* iii. 3, 18. Now examine, canst thou do that which no man else can do that is a mere natural man? Thou must have a strength put into thee which none can reach that hath nothing but *nature in him.* Canst thou love the Lord Jesus and *the Saints?* An hypocrite can counterfeit many things, *but not love.* Again, canst thou delight in the law of

God in the inward man! I ask not if thou canst approve of it; but canst thou delight in it, counting it as thy meat and drink to do the will of thy Father? This is a thing which cannot be counterfeited. So, canst thou deny thyself? I ask not if thou canst deny this or that particular sin, but the whole body of sin; if thou favourest the things of the Spirit; if thou canst mortify the deeds of the body, and walk according to the Spirit? If thou art a new creature, thou must find thyself able to do that which no natural man can do, and which thyself could never do before. For otherwise, What wilt thou answer for thyself when the destroying angel shall come? If he find not in thee more than nature, the destruction shall pass on thee: as it was in the passover; except there was found blood on the door-posts, they died for it. Now the blood that this destroying angel must see, when he shall pass over the world, is that which is more than nature: you must know the blood of Christ leaves an impression; their garments were made white in the blood of the Lamb; that is, not only the guilt of sin is taken away, but a new virtue is put on them, a new efficacy is put into them: and if thou hast not the virtue of the blood of Christ as well to purge thy conscience from dead works as to take away the guilt of sin, all is nothing. I say, except thou art a new creature, the destroying angel shall not spare thee, but thy sins shall be cast on thy conscience: and, when God shall cast it on thy conscience, what wilt thou say? If thou find not these two things, a weakening of this old nature, an healing of sin, and something more than nature, thou canst not apply the comfort of justification, thou art not in Christ; for thou art not a new creature, which consists of these two parts, vivification and mortification. *Preston.*

The whole law is imprest on the gracious soul: every part of it is written over upon the renewed heart. And, though remaining corruption makes such blots in the writing, that, often times, the man himself cannot read it; yet he that wrote it, can read it at all times;

is never quite blotted out, nor can be. What he has written, he has written; and it shall stand. *Boston.*

For a sinner, who has broke the law, to expect to be saved by the law he has broke, i. e. by works of his own, is just as if a capital malefactor, under sentence of death, shall endeavour to sue out his pardon upon the footing of that very act of parliament by virtue of which he stands condemned. *Madan.*

I would run away from the law (considered as a covenant of works), as fast as I would from my sins. *Huntingdon.*

Faith is the eye of the soul. This eye, beholding the sin of the soul in having pierced Christ, and Christ pardoning it's sin, affects the heart: whence the heart sends forth affecting sighs. All this is done when there is no tempest of terror on the spirit, but a sweet serenity of love and peace. See, therefore, O believer, how Satan misinforms thee, when he would persuade thee, that thou art not humbled enough, because thy sorrow is not attended with legal terrors. *Gurnall.*

What is life, but a warfare? And what is the world, but a thoroughfare? *Dyer.*

The slow motion of a living man (though so feeble, perhaps, that he cannot go a furlong in a day), yet coming from life, imports more strength than is in a ship, which (though it sails swiftly) hath it's motion from without. Thus, possibly, an hypocrite may exceed a true Christian, in the bulk and outside of a duty; yet, because his strength is not from spiritual life, but from some wind and tide abroad, that carries him on, while the Christian is from a divine principle within: therefore the Christian's weakness is stronger than the hypocrite in his greatest enlargements. *Gurnall.*

I have rather smoke, than fire; and guessings, rather than assurances of Christ's love. I have little or nothing to say, but that I am as one who hath found favour in his eyes. *Rutherfoord.*

When a pearl or a diamond is defiled with dust or mire, it's lustre cannot be discerned, until it is washed

When corruptions are great, and experiences small, a little grace can hardly be discerned: as a needle is more difficult to be discoverd, than a staff. *Manton.*

Omitting little truths, against light, may breed hell in the conscience, as well as committing the greatest sins, against light. *Wilcox.*

The spirit of Christ sweetly calms the soul of a suffering believer, not by taking away all sense of pain, but by overcoming it with the sense of his love. *Gurnall.*

Do Christ this one favour, for all his love to thee: love all his saints; even the poorest, the meanest, and the weakest, notwithstanding some slight differences in judgment. As the names of the children of Israel were graven on Aaron's breast-plate; so are the names of all God's saints, engraven on the heart of Christ. Let them be likewise so on thine. *Wilcox.*

Every man can love his friend; but only a godly man can love his enemy. *Parr.*

It was a notable saying of an holy man, "Quench hell and burn heaven, yet will I love and fear my God." *Dodd.*

Other lovers, beside Christ, are in suit of you, and your soul hath many wooers: but let your soul be a chaste virgin, and love but one. Most worthy is Christ alone, of all your love, were your love higher than heaven and broader than the whole world.

Proportionable to the renovation of the image of God, and the likeness of God upon our souls, is our love to Jesus Christ. *Owen.*

When we love God most, our duties run on the most freely and sweetly: and when our thoughts are most steeped in the love of God to us, we are then most likely to love him abundantly in return. *Manton.*

It is sad, when after spiritual enlargements, and the performance of spiritual duties, believers are off their guard, and negligent in honouring God by good works, in the sight of all men: when, like Moses, they no sooner *come down from the* mount, than they turn, and break *the tables of the law.* Oh, Christians, either vindicate

the name of Christ (whose banner you would seem to march after), by the holiness of your conversations; or honestly throw away your profession of godliness, and your seeming zeal for Christ, by which you have drawn the eyes of the world upon you. *Gurnall.*

Our lusts are cords. Fiery trials are sent to burn and consume them.

Happy are they, who dare venture out, into the open streets, with the name of Christ upon their foreheads; at a time when so many are ashamed of him, and hide him (as it were) under their cloaks, as if he were a stolen Saviour. *Rutherfoord.*

Such as rake up the old sins of saints (sins which God hath forgiven and forgotten), merely to grieve their spirits, and to spatter their names; shew their malice indeed; who can take such pains to travel many years back, that they may find an handful of dirt, to throw in a saint's face. Thus Shimei twitted David, 1 *Sam.* i. 6, 7. Come out, thou bloody man.

When you, who fear God, meet with such reproaches, answer them, as Beza did the Papists, when, for want of other matter, they upbraided him for some wanton poems, penned by him in his youth: *Hi homunciones invident mihi gratiam Dei*, said he; "These men grudge me the pardoning mercy of God." *Gurnall.*

Easy, good-natured, affable men, whose hearts are nevertheless unrenewed by divine grace; may be compared to ripe plumbs and apricots, which, however soft and smooth on the outside, yet have an hard stone within. *Anon.*

The natural man is a spiritual monster. His heart is where his feet should be; fixed upon the earth; his heels are lifted up against heaven, which his heart should be set on. His face is towards hell; his back towards heaven. He loves what he should hate, and hates what he should love; joys in what he ought to mourn for, and mourns for what he ought to rejoice in; glories in his shame, and is ashamed of his glory; abhors what he should desire, and desires what he should abhor. Boston.

None of Adam's children naturally incline to receive the blessings in borrowed robes; but would always, according to the spider's motto, owe all to themselves: and so climb up to heaven on a thread spun out of their own bowels. For they desire to be under the law, *Gal.* iv. 21. and go about to establish their own righteousness, *Rom.* x. 3. *ibid.*

The affections of the unrenewed man are as an unruly horse, that either will not receive, or violently runs away with, the rider. *ibid.*

After great manifestations of God's love, it is usual for the tempter to be unusually busy.—So weak is the constitution of grace below, that we cannot, of ourselves, bear either the smiles or the frowns of God, without some degree of danger.—If God smile, and open himself familiarly to us, then we are prone to grow high and wanton: if he frown, then faith sinks and hope sickens. Thus exalted manifestations, like bright weather and warm air, are followed by the weeds of corruption; and the other, like a sharp, intense frost, nips and almost kills the flowers of joy, peace, and comfort. *Anon.*

That the blessed God can impress on the mind so strong a sense of pardon, as to leave a repenting sinner, beyond all question, satisfied of its coming from him; none can doubt, but those who are for limiting the power of the Almighty, and for prescribing to the wisdom of the All-wise. And that, in many instances, God is most graciously pleased, in this manner, to manifest himself and his love, none can dispute, who have been happily acquainted with the lives and deaths of the excellent of the earth. *Venn.*

Is the faith of Christ fatal to refined manners, as the rod of Moses was to the counterfeit miracles of the magicians? No. It is rather like the influence of the sanctuary, on the rod of Aaron: which, while it remained at a distance from the tabernacle, was a dry, sapless, and barren stick; but when deposited before the ark, was quickened into vegetable life, was adorned with a milk-white bloom, and enriched with full

grown fruit: or, as the sacred historian expresses this surprising fact, it "brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds," Numb. xvii. 8.

Hervey.

Man lives by death. His natural life is maintained by the death of the creatures; and his spiritual and eternal life are owing to the death of his Saviour.

Dyer.

Ye that go to the father, and think to set yourselves in his presence, and stand as the objects of his delight, on the footing of your own righteousness; shame and confusion of face will cover you, before ye are aware. Paul durst not be found in it; but looking upon it as dung: and dung, you know, is both offensive in itself, and unable to support the man that stands upon it. Let a man venture upon Christ, as the way to the Father, and he shall not sink. *Crisp.*

All the righteousness of man is not able to uphold him; nay there is that in man's righteousness, which will sink him [if rested upon and trusted to;] for, he that hath broke the law but in one point, is guilty of all. Christ therefore is the only rock on which sinners can build their hope. *ibid.*

I know some places, that are as green and fair to the eye, as the best way man ever set foot into: yet, if you venture upon them, you sink up to the neck.—Whilst men make their own righteousness and obedience their way to God's favour they seem to be in a fair and green path, which promiseth safety and firmness: yet, he that dares trust himself in the way of his own righteousness, as his way to God and heaven, will find himself sink so fast, that, if Christ come not and pluck him out, he will sink over head and ears. *ibid.*

In the way of works a man loses himself presently. There is not one work he does, but he commits sin in it: and God will never let the soul come near to him, that comes with any sin whatever. I speak this of the *righteousness of* man, while he makes that his way to *God.* *ibid.*

The value of things are best known by comparison. Let me, then, run an imperfect parallel between this present life I now enjoy, in all its best things, as well as its worst things, and that better life I expect after death.

In this life I *may* have *at times*,	But—in that I *shall* have *always*,
1. A mortal health,	1. Eternal vigour.
2. Some tainted pleasures,	2. Pure delights and holy raptures.
3. A few friends for a few days,	3. All my friends about me for ever.
4. Some acres of ground,	4. An unbounded inheritance in the heavenly Canaan.
5. Fine clothing of wool,	5. Robes of righteousness, and garments of glory.
6. An house painted with vermilion,	6. A house not made with hands.
7. Bread to eat, and water to drink,	7. The hidden manna, and the river of life.
8. A portion of the good things of time;	8. The glorious treasures of eternity.

Spiritual Good Things.

In this life I *may* have,	But in that life I *shall* have,
1. Communications of grace,	1. Eternal glory.
2. Freedom from the reign of sin,	2. Deliverance from the being of sin.
3. Glances of faith,	3. Immediate vision.
4. God in his ordinances,	4. Uninterrupted communion.
5. Manifestations of love,	5. All the transports of eternal assurance, and everlasting bliss.
6. Access to the throne of grace;	6. Uninterrupted attendance at the throne of glory.

Now, what a wide difference is there between u

best state here, and the better, the blessed state above! But how will it still widen, when my worst condition is brought into one side of the comparison! with this melancholy addition, that I am oftenest in my worst state.

In this life, then,	But—in that life,
1. I often sin against God,	1. I shall never offend the eyes of his glory.
2. I go mourning without the sun,	2. My sun shall go down no more, and the days of my mourning shall be ended.
3. I dwell in the valley of Achor, and mine exercise is lamentation and mourning, and my daily attendants sorrow and woe,	3. I shall dwell on the mount of communion, and mine exercise be hallelujah and hosannah, and mine attendants transport and joy.
4. Death snatches away my nearest and dearest friends, and with them crops all the joys of life.	4. Jesus, my best friend, shall for ever cheer my ravished eyes, and fill my folded arms.
5. My knowledge of divine things is very lame,	5. I shall know even as I am known.
6. My graces often are baffled by prevailing corruption and a tempting devil,	6. All my graces shall wear the crown of perfection.
7. disease attacks me often, and death attends me always,	7. I shall never complain of sickness, being above the reach of sin and death.
8. I am often too ready to say, What a weariness is it to serve God?	8. I shall serve him day and night with rapture and delight.
9. I daily see transgressors, *and am* grieved with *self-destroyers*,	9. There shall not be one Canaanite in all the house of God, one sinner in all the land of glory.

10. Both vain and wicked thoughts often, alas! too often rise, rage, and ravage in my mind,

10. My soul shall be swept of all the trash of sin, and all my thoughts shall soar in adoration, and dissolve in love.

11. Often my society is among those that seem to have no fellowship with the Father, nor his Son Christ Jesus.

11. I shall associate myself with the general assembly and church of the first born.

Meikle.

The king of terrors approaching to destroy my mortal frame, the Judge standing at the door to sit in judgment on me, and eternal ages opening before me, are views that might fill my soul with terror and despair; but if faith can see death only as a servant bringing me home, the Judge as acquitting and bestowing the crown, and eternity as an endless summer of love and light, communion with, and fruition of God, then may my soul be filled with transport and joy. *ibid.*

I think it a greater sin, to marry on the Lord's day, than to yoke a plough: inasmuch as the work and concern is greater. The sinful continuance of this, I judge to be a provoking profanation of the Sabbath: and I seldom see those marriages blest, which were celebrated on that day. *Frazer.*

When God discovers himself by means, we know no more of him than can be represented by those means. If a pipe should be put to a great ocean, or river, the cistern, or conduit, can receive no more than the pipe can convey. *Manton.*

It is a greater mercy, to have a spiritual appetite for the means of grace, and to be providentially debarred from enjoying them; than to have opportunities of attending them, without an appetite for them. *Gay.*

Passionate reproofs are like medicines given scalding hot: the patient cannot take them. If we wish to do good to those we rebuke, we should labour for meekness of wisdom, and use soft words and hard arguments.

Dodd

To exercise mercy, is God's great prerogative; an act not of debt, but of royal bounty: which he exercises when, and to whom, it seemeth good in his sight. *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*, is his high and holy resolve. *Hervey.*

Dr. Bates has an observation to the same effect:

"As, at the deluge, the waters covered the highest mountains, as well as the lowest hills; so, pardoning mercy, cancels the greatest sins, as well as the least." *Arrowsmith.*

The sun is glorious and beautiful: but, if the moon and every star had as much brightness, it would not be so peculiarly admired. Thus the mercy of God, towards his elect, is so much the more admirable, by being contrasted with his wrath against the reprobate. *Parr.*

Let us learn to run up all the mercies, we are partakers of, to the proper spring—"who loved me, and gave himself for me." *Owen.*

Special mercies call for special duties; as they, that hold the largest farms, must pay the largest rent. *Dyer.*

To bless God for mercies, is the way to increase them; to bless him for miseries, is the way to remove them. No good lives so long, as that which is thankfully improved: no evil dies so soon, as that which is patiently endured. *ibid.*

Free-will establishes merit; free-grace checks it. The sun is not beholden to us, because we borrow light from it: or the fountain, because we draw water. *Manton.*

If one workman should tell you that "your house must be pulled down, that the beams are all rotten, and new materials must be prepared;" and another should say, "No; the house will stand firm enough with a little repair, such a beam is good, such a spar may continue, and a trifling cost will serve the turn;" you would, *probably*, listen to him who is for putting you to the least *expense* and trouble.

An honest and faithful minister of Christ comes and lls sinners, from the Scriptures, that man is, by nature, a dangerous condition; that his house is tumbling bout his ears; that his natural state is corrupt and rot- n; that nothing of the original frame will serve; that d things must be done away, and all things become w.—Next, in steps an Arminian and blows up the ner's pride, by telling him, that he is neither so weak, r so wicked, as the other represents him; that a little tching and whitewashing will set all to rights, without king any part of the building down. "If thou wilt," ys he, "thou mayest repent, believe, be good, and en- re to the end: or, at least, by exerting thy natural abi- ies, thou wilt oblige God to lend an helping hand to y endeavours, and superadd what thou hast not." his is the workman, that will please proud men best.

Gurnall.

If a minister be erroneous, how should the flock be und? No readier way to destroy a whole town, than poisoning the cistern, at which they draw their water.

ibid.

How shall the prophane be hardened in their sins? et the preacher but sow pillows under their elbows, d cry peace, peace; and all is done. How may the orship of God come to be neglected? Let Hophi and hineas be scandalous in their lives, and men will soon me to abhor the offering of the Lord. *ibid.*

The Devil hath his ministers as well as Christ. *Dyer.*

Too many modern preachers resemble auctioneers, ho put up heaven to the highest bidder. *Serle.*

Under the law, the priest had part of the sacrifices as- gned to himself and his own peculiar use.—Under the spel, Christ's ministers, when they are made instru- ents of spiritual comfort to others, generally come in r a share of the consolation themselves. God often aters the preacher, while the preacher is watering the ople. *Ryland.*

The shoulder (which is the working part of the ox) s *the priest's* portion: to shew that God's minister

should labour for what they receive, and not eat the bread of idleness. *ibid.*

That minister is worth nothing who cannot make the Devil roar. *ibid.*

A judicious minister will accommodate his labours to the apprehensions and peculiar cases of his people; as the prophet Elijah adapted his own size to that of the child he raised to life. *ibid.*

A good man was observing to me, to-day, that "many ministers speak so sparingly and so coldly of the gospel privileges of the saints, that one would imagine they thought themselves no more than scare-crows, set up on purpose to frighten God's people from the corn."

What recompense did the prophets receive (from the world), for all their labours and expanse of spirits (in preaching), but saws, and swords, and dungeons? It is almost as much the character of a minister, to be much in afflictions, as to be much in spirit, and much in labours. "To preach," said Luther, "is only another name for deriving and entailing the world's hatred upon ourselves." But we may justly suspect, that we are not true to our master, when we are dandled on the world's knees. *Manton.*

Some people are apt to blame Christian ministers, for dealing too faithfully with their hearers. But was I to see a blind man walking towards a gravel-pit two or three hundred foot deep, and I was to beg him, for his own sake, not to go on; would it not be very absurd in him to be angry, and to answer, what is my danger to you? Pray, mind your own business?" *Wallis.*

Ministers are, in general, apt to make too wide a distinction between seekers and believers; a man must have some degree of saving grace, and of true faith, before ever he can seek Christ in earnest. *Madan.*

We [ministers] should not [only] be like dials on a wall, or like watches in our pockets, to teach the eye; but like clocks and alarms, to ring to the ear. Aaron *must wear bells*, as well as pomegranates. The prophet's *voice must* be a trumpet, whose sound may be heard

—A sleeping centinel may be the loss of a whole
Hall.

architect cannot say to his rule, his line, or other
ments, "Go, build an house." He must, first,
em into his own hand, ere the wished-for effect
llow. What are ministers of God but mere in-
ents? And, if ever they are useful in building up
urch of Christ, it is his own hand must make them
Hitchen.

re is nothing that doth truly and unfeignedly root
dness out of the heart of man but only the true
illity of the mind, or the rest of the soul in God.
o say as the thing is, this is such a peace and such
to the creature in the Creator, that, according to
asure of its establishment by faith, no created com-
nsible thing can either add to it or detract from it:
crease of a kingdom cannot augment it, the great-
ses and crosses in worldly things cannot dimin-
. A believer's good works do all flow from it.
er sin nor Satan, law nor conscience, hell nor grave,
uite extinguish it; for it is the Lord alone that
ains it. It is the pleasant face of God in Christ
uts gladness into his heart, and when that face is
hen is he troubled. Though the peace and joy of
believers may be extenuated or diminished, yet
the testimony of their being, in nature remain so
, that they can say, yea, even when they have felt
to be withdrawing himself from them, My God,
od, why hast thou forsaken me; yea, and in the
of God's absence to remain confident, that though
w be over night, yet joy will come in the morning:
hough the Lord should seem to kill them with un-
ess, yet will they put their trust in him, knowing
for all this, their Redeemer liveth: so strong is
joy in the Lord. These are the people that are
in perfect peace, because their minds are stayed on
ord, *Isa.* xxvi. 3. Wherefore take heed of deem-
y state happy, until you come to find this true
and rest to your souls in God. Mod. Divir

In the present beholding the glory of Christ the life and power of faith are most eminently acted: and from this exercise of faith doth love unto Christ principally (if not solely) arise and spring. If therefore we desire to have faith in its vigour, or love in its power, giving rest, complacency, and satisfaction to our own souls, we are to seek for them in the diligent discharge of this duty: elsewhere they will not be found. Herein would I live, herein would I die; herein would I dwell in my thoughts and affections, to the withering and consumption of all the painted beauties of this world, unto the crucifying all things here below, until they become unto me a dead and deformed thing, no way meet for affectionate embraces. *Owen.*

Hath he the heart of a Christian who doth not often meditate on the death of his Saviour, who doth not derive his life from it? Who can look into the gospel and not fix on those lines which either immediately and directly, or through some other paths of divine grace and wisdom, do lead him thereunto? Can any have believing thoughts cencerning the death of Christ, and not have his heart affected with ardent love unto his person? Christ in the gospel is evidently set forth crucified before us. Can any by the eye of faith look on this blessed dying Redeemer, and suppose love unto his person to be nothing but the work of fancy or imagination? They know the contrary who always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, as the apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* iv. 10. As his whole name, in all that he did, is as ointment poured forth; for which the virgins love him, *Song* i. 3. so this precious perfume of his death is that wherewith their hearts are ravished in a peculiar manner. *ibid.*

The principle design of their whole lives, to whom Christ is precious, is to acquaint themselves with him; the mystery of the wisdom, grace, and love of God in *his person* and mediation, as revealed unto us in the *scripture*, which is life eternal, to trust in him and unto *him as to* all the everlasting concern of their souls,

and honour him with all their hearts, to endeav-
after conformity unto him in all those characters
ivine goodness and holiness which are represented
them in him. In these things consist the soul,
power, beauty, excellency and efficacy of the
stian religion; without which, whatever outward
ments may be put upon its exercise, it is but a
ss, lifeless carcass. *ibid.*

e to whom you are beholden for your lives, liber-
comforts, and all that you enjoy in this world. Is
t Christ, who orders all for you? He indeed is in
en, out of your sight; but, though you see him
he sees you, and takes care of your concerns. In
ıy ways acknowledge him, it is he that hath espied
hat state thou art in, as most proper for thee. It
ırist that hath done all for thee that is done. He
s down from heaven upon all that fear him: He
when you are in danger by temptation, and casts
providence (you know not how) to hinder it: He
when you are sad, and orders reviving provid-
s to refresh you: He sees when corruptions pre-
and orders humbling providences to purge them:
: ever mercies you have received, all along the
you have gone hitherto, are the orderings of
ıst for you. *Flaval*

f all acts of faith, this of pure trust doth honour
most, and hath indeed more of faith in it: the
r the trust is, the greater the trust is; and the great-
ıe trust is, the greater the faith is; and the great-
ıe faith, the more honour comes to God. The end
God hath ordained faith is, that his free grace
ıt be glorified: now his free grace is glorified by
ct of faith more than by this of pure trusting in
ı. In *Rom.* iv. 20. where Abraham's faith is set
to us, it is set out by this, that he gave glory to
. You do not honour God so much by your love,
do not honour Him so much by being assured of
ve, as you do by trusting in his love. It magni-
e sovereignty of God, which God aims at to mag-

nify in our salvation: it leaves the soul at God's feet; for that is the posture of the soul, when it says, here am I, and I will trust in thee alone. It magnifies the faithfulness of God; and faithfulness is that attribute which, in one that makes a promise, is the chief thing he aims at. Now faith takes hold on Christ through a promise; therefore it is a grace suited and fitted to magnify the faithfulness of God more than loving him. If a man have assurance, he doth glorify God in a way of rejoicing, in a way of triumphing, in a way of thankfulness; but pure trust doth glorify God another way, it glorifies God in a way of obedience. Oftentimes a man trusteth God for the salvation of his soul, and goes on so to do, and doth not of a long time know that God hath received him; he hath not received an earnest penny a long while of what he trusted God for (for joy in the Holy Ghost is the reward of faith.) Now, to stand thus out of purse for many years before a man receives a penny, this is a great and mighty trust. For a man to venture to sea without either sail, oar, or mast, or any thing of his own, and to be wafted by Jesus Christ and free grace, to commit himself to those winds which shall blow from him that promise he makes; this is the great trust: and this the soul doth when he comes to Christ. *Goodwin.*

Doctrines of the greatest weight are talked of and treated about with a vain, unconcerned frame of spirit, as if men contended about opinions and school-points, rather than about the oracles of God and matters of faith. But if men's hearts were seen by themselves, if sin were felt, if men's consciences were enlivened, if God's holy law were known in its exactness and severity, and the glory and the majesty of the lawgiver shining before men's eyes, if men were living as leaving time and launching forth into eternity, the gospel salvation by Jesus Christ would be more regarded. *Trail.*

Those that receive Christ with an unfeigned faith *shall never* want a wedding garment to adorn them *in the sight of* God. Faith itself is very precious in the

ght of God, and most holy. God loves it because it veth the glory of our salvation only to the free grace God in Christ, and renounceth all dependance on y conditions that we can perform to procure a right to rist, or to make ourselves acceptable to him. The cellency of faith lies in this, that it accounteth not it- f, nor any other work of ours, a sufficient ornament make us acceptable in the sight of God. It will not our wedding-garment itself; but it buyeth of Christ nite raiment that we may be clothed, and that the ame of our nakedness may not appear. *Marshal.*

That faith which works in the soul a gracious persua- on of the excellency of this way, by a sight of the glo- , wisdom, power, grace, love and goodness of God in , so as to be satisfied with it as the best the only way of ming unto God, with a renunciation of all other ways d means unto that end, will at all times evidence its ture and sincerity. *Owen.*

Faith embraceth the knowledge of the mystery of od and Christ in the light of grace; the truth of hich mystery the believer acknowledgeth with full con- nt of mind on the authority of the testimony of God; d not only so, but he loveth the truth, rejoiceth in it, d glorifieth God, and most earnestly desires commun- n with Christ, that those things which are true in hrist may be true also to him for salvation: wherefore, hen Christ is offered to him by the word and spirit, e receiveth him with the greatest willingness of mind, e leans upon him, he rests upon him, and gives up mself wholly to him; which being done, he now glo- eth that he is his, and in him most pleasantly delight- h, resting under the shadow of the tree of life, and ntiating himself with his most sweet fruits. This is e faith of God's elect, the invaluable gift, the bond of ar union with Christ, the heavenly ladder, the key of e ark of the covenant, by which are unlocked the trea- ures thereof, the never-ceasing fountain of a holy, hap- , *quiet life.* Witsius.

The soul that is under the conduct of faith is not ea-

pable of any one desire that any thing were otherwise than it is in the will of God concerning our holiness and obedience, no more than it can desire that God should not be what he is *Owen*,

The gospel doth these two things, *viz.* It sets before us our lost undone condition by nature, and shews us the remedy in Christ; always offering mercy in Christ to all whom God calls to repentance: it is inconsistent with the goodness and wisdom of God to do otherwise: evangelical repentance must be from evangelical motives. This offer of grace and pardon in Christ must be proposed to our hearers; and, when proposed, it must be believed in some degree of saving faith before a sinner can entertain one serious thought of evangelical repentance. This offer of mercy received by faith implies a secret hope of pardon, which I conceive is the first saving work upon the soul. Faith, being thus wrought, causes a looking unto Christ only for salvation, and a secret reliance upon him for salvation: and such a faith, wrought in never so low a degree, I take to be true, saving, justifying faith. This faith includes in it the seeds of all other graces, which spring up under the influences of faith according to the degree of it. This faith works by love, and causes true evangelical repentance, which though it be no cause of our justification, yet it is always an effect of justifying faith, found in all who are justified. *Cole.*

Faith doth engraft a man, who is by nature a wild olive-branch, into Christ as into the natural olive, and fetcheth sap from the root Christ, and thereby makes the tree bring forth fruit in its kind; yea, faith fetcheth a supernatural efficacy from the death and life of Christ, by virtue whereof it metamorphoseth the heart of a believer, and createth and infuseth into him new principles of action: so that what a treasure of all graces Christ hath stored up in him, faith draineth and draweth them out to the use of a believer; being as a *conduit-cock*, that watereth all the herbs in the garden; *yea, faith* doth apply the blood of Christ to a believer's

heart, and the blood of Christ hath in it not only a power to wash from the guilt of sin, but to cleanse and purge likewise from the power and stain of sin. And therefore, saith godly Hooker, if you would have grace, you must first of all get faith, and that will bring all the rest. Let faith go to Christ, and there is meekness, patience, humility, and wisdom, and faith will fetch all them to the soul: therefore, saith he, you must not look for sanctification till you come to Christ in vocation.

Mod. Divin.

True, saving, justifying faith carries the soul through all difficulties, discouragements, and natural impossibilities, to Jesus Christ. *Bridge.*

But it remains that we inquire how faith justifies. Certainly not in that sense, as though God graciously accepts the act of faith, and new evangelical obedience proceeding from faith, in the room of that perfect obedience which, according to the strictness of the law, we ought to have: for this were to make void the whole gospel. In the room of perfect obedience, which the law requires to justification, the gospel hath not substituted our faith, but the obedience of Christ, by which the righteousness of the law is fulfilled: and it is false, that faith and our obedience are one and the same thing. I confess, faith is a virtue commanded by the law of God, and that the believer, so far as he believes, does obey God. I confess again, no faith is to be accounted true and living which is not big with good works. But yet faith is one thing, and obedience flowing from faith quite another thing, especially in the business of justification of which we treat, for Paul always contradistinguisheth all manner of works from faith. Lastly, neither the truth nor righteousness of God suffers, that our faith and obedience, which are imperfect, should be admitted as perfect: for it is the will of God, that the righteousness of the law should be fulfilled in our justification, not that any thing should derogate from it.

Witsius.

Nothing can avail in the business of justification un-

less it be plainly perfect, and in all things answers to the law of God. For in justification there is a declaration of the righteousness of God, *Rom.* iii. 25, 26. For that requires that the righteousness of the law be fulfilled, *Rom.* viii. 4. And the righteousness of the law cannot be fulfilled but by a perfect obedience. This no man can challenge to himself but a vain boaster and a liar: from whence we conclude, that no sinner can be justified by any act of his own, *Rom.* iii. 20. The apostle rests upon this axiom, That the righteousness which will be of any avail before the tribunal of God must in all points be perfect; but, seeing no works of any man are so, he concludes, that no works of any sort can confer any thing to justification. The apostle, without doubt, excludes all those works on which they who endeavour to establish their own righteousness do commonly rest: and of those, it is not credible that there hath been any one who through the whole course of their lives will say, that they have kept themselves undefiled with the least spot or stain of sin. *ibid.*

Justification is a judicial act of God, but free, whereby an elect believing sinner is absolved from the guilt of his sins, and a right adjudged to him of eternal life, for and because of the obedience of Christ, received by faith. *ibid.*

Christ maintains a little grace in his children amidst many strong corruptions and lusts: grace is but a little grain, and yet it lives and thrives; it is an abiding seed, under continual influences from Christ. *Cole.*

By the bare word of God it is that the heavens continue, and the earth (without any other foundation) hangs in the midst of the air; therefore well may the soul stay itself upon that, even when it hath nothing else in sight to stay itself upon. By his word it is that the covenant of day and night, and the preservation of the world from any further overflowings of waters, continueth; which if it should fail, yet his covenant with his people shall abide firm for ever; though the whole frame of nature were dissolved. Sibbs.

The almighty architect stretches out the north, and its whole starry train, over the empty space: he hangs the earth and all the ætherial globes upon nothing: yet are their foundations laid so sure, that they can never be moved at any time. No unfit representation to the sincere Christian of his final perseverance; but such as points out the cause that effects it, and constitutes the pledge which ascertains it. His nature is all enfeebled, he is not able of himself to think a good thought, he has no visible safeguard, nor any sufficiency of his own; and yet, whole legions of formidable enemies are combined to compass his ruin. The world lays unnumbered snares for his feet; the devil is incessantly urging the siege by a multitude of fiery darts or wily temptations; the flesh, like a perfidious inmate, under colour of friendship and a specious pretence of pleasure, is always forward to betray his integrity: but, amidst all these threatening circumstances of personal weakness and imminent danger, an invisible aid is his defence. I will uphold thee (says the blessed God) with the right hand of my righteousness. O comfortable truth! The arm which fixeth the stars in their courses, and guides the planets in theirs, is stretched out to preserve the heirs of salvation. My sheep (adds the great Redeemer) are mine; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. What words are these! And did they come from him who hath all power in heaven and earth? And were they spoken to every unfeigned though feeble follower of the great Shepherd? Then Omnipotence itself must be vanquished before they can be destroyed, either by the seductions of fraud or the assaults of violence. If you ask therefore what security we have of enduring to the end, and continuing faithful unto death? The very same that establishes the heavens, and settles the ordinances of the universe. Can these be thrown into confusion? Then may the true believer draw back unto perdition? Can the sun be *dislodged* from his sphere, and rush lawlessly *through the sky?* Then, and then only can the faith of

God's elect be overthrown finally. Be of good courage then, O my soul; rely on those divine succours which are so solemnly stipulated, so faithfully promised. Though thy grace be languid as the glimmering spark —though the overflowings of corruption threaten it with total extinction; yet, since the great Jehovah has undertaken to cherish the dim principle, many waters cannot quench it, nor the floods drown it. Nay, though it were feeble as the smoking flax, almighty goodness stands engaged to augment the heat, to raise the fire, and feed the flame, till it beam forth a lamp of immortal glory in the heavens. *Hervey.*

Unto the power of God is our perseverance wholly attributed. Ye are kept (as with a garrison, as the word signifies) through the power of God unto salvation. And were there not a great and an apparent danger of miscarrying, such a mighty guard would not be needed. There is nothing puts us into such danger as our corruptions that still remain in us, which fight against the soul, and endeavour to overcome and destroy us. Now then, to be kept, maugre all these; to have grace maintained, a spark of grace in the midst of a sea of corruption; how doth this honour the power of God in keeping us! How will the grace of God under the gospel triumph over the grace of God given Adam in innocency! When Adam having his heart full of inherent grace, and nothing inwardly in his nature to seduce him, and the temptation that he had being but matter of curiosity, and the pleasing his wife, yet he fell. When as many poor souls under the state of grace, that have but mites of grace in comparison, and worlds of corruption, are yet kept, not only from the unnecessary pleasures of sin in time of prosperity, but hold out against all the threats, all the cruelties of wicked persecutors in the time of persecution, which threatens to debar them of all the present good they enjoy! And though God's people are often foiled, yet *that there should* still remain a seed within them. This *illustrates* the grace of Christ under the gospel. For

one act in Adam expelled all grace out of him, when yet his heart was full of nothing else. Were our hearts filled with grace perfectly at first conversion, this power would not be seen; neither would the confusion of the devil be so great, and the victory so glorious, if all sin were at first conversion expelled. For by this means the devil in his assaults against us hath the more advantages, fair play, (as I may say) fair hopes of overcoming, having a great faction in us as ready to sin as he is greedy to tempt; and yet God carries on his own work begun, though slowly and by degrees, backeth and maintaineth a small party of grace within us to his confusion. That as, in God's outward government towards his church here on earth, he suffers a great party, the greater by far, to be against his church, and yet upholds it, and rules among the midst of his enemies, so doth he also in every particular believer's heart. When grace shall be in us but as a spark, and corruptions as much smoke and moisture damping it; grace but as a candle, and that in the socket, among huge and many winds; then to bring forth judgment unto victory, that is a victory indeed.

Constantly in gospel obedience is the beauty and glory of it. All that profess godliness keep the law now and then; but the excellency of it lies in constancy.

Cole.

If God has made thee (of a great sinner) the object of his mercy, thou mayst be assured of a continuance of his love. He pardoned thee when thou wast an enemy; will he leave thee now thou art his friend? He loved thee when thou hadst razed out in a great measure his image and picture, which he had set in thy soul; will he hate thee now, since he has restored that image, and drawn it with fresh colours? He justified thee when thou wast ungodly; and will he cast thee off since he hath been at such pains about thee, and written in thee a counterpart of his own divine nature in the *work of grace?* Were his bowels first moved when *thou hadst no grace*; and will they not sound louder

when thou hast grace? Thou hadst a rich present of his grace sent thee when thou couldst not pray for it; and will he not much more give thee whatever is needful when thou callest upon him; He was found of thee when thou didst not seek him; and will he hide himself from thee when thou art inquiring after him? God considered before he began with thee, what charge thou wouldst stand him in, both of merit in Christ, and of grace in thee; so that the grace he hath given thee is not only a mercy to thee, but an obligation on himself, since his credit is engaged to complete it. Thou hast more unanswerable arguments to plead before him than thou hadst; *viz.* his Son, his truth, his promise, his grace, his name, wherein before thou hadst not the least interest. To what purpose hath God called thee and washed thee, if he did not intend to supply thee with as much grace as shall bring thee to glory? Hath God given thee Christ, and will he detain any thing else? *Charnock.*

Well, Christ is in heaven, our true treasure, whither neither the thief, nor moth, nor canker can come. This is our happiness, that he keepeth our treasure; it is out of the reach of devils and men: were it in our hands we would soon betray it. If we are set in heaven with Christ, Christ may as soon be pulled out of heaven as we disappointed of our inheritance. *Bain.*

A saint may be brought very low, but he can never fall below a promise: he may lose estate, friends, and health, and much of the presence of God; but, if once in covenant with God, he can never lose the promise: the word of the Lord endures for ever. There is my comfort. *Cole.*

Faith's assurance, that in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting strength, even while we have not the experience of the communications of it, is a cordial against fainting. *Halyburton.*

Perturbations, sorrows, dread, dejections, fears, are *no duty unto* any; only they are such things as sometimes ensue, or are immitted into the mind, upon that

which is a duty indispensable, namely, the conviction of sin. They belong not to the precept of the law, but to its curse; they are no part of what is required of us, but of what is inflicted on us. There is a gospel sorrow and humiliation after believing that is a duty, that is both commanded and hath promises annexed to it; but this legal sorrow is an effect of the curse of the law, not of its command. And God is pleased to exercise a prerogative and sovereignty in this whole matter, and deals with the souls of men in an unspeakable variety. Some he leads by the gates of death and hell to rest in his love, like the people of old through the waste and howling wilderness into Canaan; and the paths of others he makes plain and easy to them: some walk or wander long in darkness; in the souls of others Christ is formed in the first gracious visitation. *Owen.*

Men may love their friends more than they can help them; but the loving kindness of God is attended with a power as infinite as itself. *Charnock.*

Herod was a wonderful gospeller, for a while: until John told him of his incest. So a minister is a mighty good man with his people, until he lays the ax of his ministry to their favourite sins and errors. *Parr.*

Men are bunglers, who are taught by any other but God. We, that are ministers of the gospel, leave you but dunces in Christian experience and Christian practice, till the Lord Jesus Christ breathes with our ministry, and, by his spirit, teaches your spirits. *Gurnall.*

One capital error in men's preparing themselves for the sacred function, is, that they read divinity more in other books, than in the Scriptures. *Burnet.*

Ask yourselves often [says the bishop, addressing himself to the clergy of our Church,] would you follow that course of life, if there were no settled establishment belonging to it, and if you were to preach under the cross and in danger of persecution? For, till you arrive at that, you are yet carnal, and come into the priesthood for a *piece of bread*. *ibid.*

I have lamented, during my whole life, that I saw so

little true zeal among our clergy. The main body of our clergy has always appeared dead and lifeless to me. Instead of animating one another, they seem to lay one another asleep. Without a visible alteration in this, you will fall under an universal contempt, and lose both the credit and the fruits of your ministry. *ibid.*

I say it with regret; I have observed the clergy, in all the places through which I have travelled, Papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Dissenters: but of them all, our clergy are the most remiss in their labours, and the least severe in their lives. *ibid.*

The doctrinal mysteries of Christianity are bones to philosophy, but milk to faith. *Howell.*

Remember thy sins, and Christ's pardonings; thy hell-deservings, and Christ's merits; thy weakness, and Christ's strength; thy pride, and Christ's humility; thy many infirmities, and Christ's restorings; thy guilts, and Christ's new applications of his blood; thy fallings, and Christ's raisings-up; thy wants, and Christ's fullness; thy temptations, and Christ's tenderness; thy vileness, and Christ's righteousness. *Wilcox.*

The name of God is the believer's harbour; where he may betake himself as boldly as a man steps into his own house when overtaken by a shower. *Gurnall.*

Almighty power, made lovely by an essential union with perfect wisdom, justice, and mercy, makes up the name of God, and demands the heart-felt adoration of his creatures. *Anon.*

We are for bringing to Christ; and that must not be. Not a penny of nature's highest improvements will pass in heaven. *Wilcox.*

When nature is hard put to it, by guilt, or wrath, it will fly to its old haunts of self-righteousness, self-goodness, &c. Only God's infinite power can cast down these strong-holds. *ibid.*

Nature would do any thing, to be saved, rather than go to Christ alone, and close with him. Christ will *have nothing*; and yet the soul will force something of *its own on* Christ. *ibid.*

Nature cannot endure to think, that the gospel is only for sinners. It would, if left to itself, rather chuse to despair, than go to Christ upon such terms. *ibid.*

It is a terrible stroke to nature, to think of being stripped of all, and not to have a rag of duty or self-righteousness left to look at. *ibid.*

Such is the natural propensity of man's heart to the way of the law, in opposition to Christ; that, as the tainted vessel turns the taste of the purest liquor put into it, so the natural man turns the very gospel into law, and would transform the covenant of grace into a covenant of works. *Boston.*

It is but a small thing, to see Christ in a book, as men see the world in a map: but to come near unto Christ, to love him and embrace him, is quite another thing. *Rutherfoord.*

Let Diotrephes say, it is good for me to have the pre-eminence. Let Judas say, it is good for me to bear the bag. Let Demas say, it is good for me to embrace the present world.—But do thou, O my soul, say, with David, it is good for me to draw near to God. *Arrowsmith.*

It is now twenty-three years, since I was awakened to know the work of God upon my heart: and I feel my need of Christ more deeply, at the end of these three and twenty years, than I even did when I was first drawn to him. *Foss.*

Was it not for needy, helpless, thirsting sinners, Christ would have no customers. The blessings of grace and glory would, as it were, lie upon his hands. *Arrowsmith.*

Christians are too negligent, and do not live like those that are born of God. As it was said of Hannibal, when he was melting himself away in the pleasures of Capua, that "there was fire in him, but it needed blowing;" so, in true believers, there is grace at the bottom, but it needs a little stirring and quickening. *Manton.*

If thou art not born again, all thy [outward] reformation is naught. Thou hast shut the door, but the thief is still *in the* house. Boston.

There is no condition in the new covenant. It is the

freeness of God's love, and the greatness of his compassion, that undertakes [and accomplishes] all. *Wright.*

Obedience is necessary to our comfort and assurance, though not to pardon. *Richardson.*

A believer hath so much opposition in his way to glory, that he had need be well locked into the saddle of his profession, or he will be soon dismounted. *Gurnall.*

Whence is it, that the doctrines of special election, of efficacious grace in regeneration and conversion, of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, and of the infallible perseverance of the saints; though so clearly revealed, and so strongly proved, in the word of God; are, notwithstanding, so generally denied, opposed, and ridiculed? Because they give all the glory to God, and will not allow man so much as to boast a little. *Anon.*

Some observations of the excellent Mr. Thomas Cole*, in an account of his own experience.

"I liken the word of God to a seal, and the heart of man to wax: and, I must say, I have often seen what has been engraven on the seal, when, to my sorrow, I have not found full and suitable impressions on my own heart. But yet, as in some old coin, some worn groats, there appears here and there a little, here and there a stroke, that discovers the value of the piece, and makes it current money; so, when I have said the best I can of my case, though I cannot present you with grace in as desirable characters as I could wish; yet, what I am, I am by grace: and if God should never do more for me in this world, I have reason to bless his name, to all eternity, for what he hath already done.

"Before I had considered the grace of God, I was afraid of my own convictions. I durst not scrape too deep in that dunghill, which lay before my door: there was enough already apparent, that I knew not well what to do with. But the general consideration of the grace and mercy of God encouraged me to look farther. I

* Author of that valuable Treatise on Regeneration.

hought thus: there is a remedy to be had, let things be is bad as bad can be; there is a physician, and many promises of pardon and assistance. Whence I concluded, that I might safely venture to know the worst of myself.

"I was convinced, I could be saved no other way, but by grace, if I could but find grace enough: but, at hat time, I saw more in my own sin, than in God's nercy. But this put me on a farther inquiry after the grace of God, because my life lay upon it: and thus I was brought to the gospel.

"When I came to the gospel, I met with the law in t: i. e. I was for turning the gospel into law. I began o settle myself upon gospel duties, as repentance, humiliation, believing, praying, &c. And, I know not now, forgot the promise of grace, which first brought me to the gospel. But as I had before found, that I could not answer the strictness of the law, because my duties fell short of the rule; so I came to discover, that I could not answer the [spirituality] of the gospel, for I pressed after acts of grace upon a legal footing; making works of them all. I found I could neither believe, nor pray, as the gospel required.

"While I was in this plunge, it pleased the Lord to direct me to study the person of Christ: whom I looked on as the great undertaker in the work of man's salvation. And, truly, here I may say, according to my measure, as Paul did, "it pleased God to reveal his son in me." God overcame my heart with this. I saw so much mercy in his mercy, so much love in his love, so much grace in his grace, that I knew not what to liken it to. And here my heart broke, I knew not how.

"Belief of salvation must be grounded on some inward transaction between Christ and the soul. I began to consider, whether any such thing had passed between Christ and me; and, while I was looking this way, the Lord *Jesus drew* me; and took hold of me, in raising *me up to a sensible* reliance on him.

"*I never had* a more lively sense of my acceptanc

with God through Christ, than when I was sensible of the greatest recumbency on him: when I laid most stress upon him, I always found most strength in him.

"Before this faith came, I knew not how to secure myself against past, present, and future sins: but there was that largeness of grace, that all-sufficiency of mercy, that infinity of righteousness, discovered to me in Christ, that I found sufficient for all the days of my life. I closed with Christ for acceptance throughout the whole course of my life. I dealt with him for all, at once.

"Though new guilt puts me under a necessity of making fresh application to Christ, yet still it is upon the old footing. I cannot put Christ upon doing that for me, which he hath not already done. I daily apply to Christ for cleansing; which I call, living by faith: and I never was under the power of this faith, but I found a greater disposition in my spirit to practical holiness, than at any other time."

Some things said by the same Mr. Thomas Cole, on his death-bed.

"Many plead for those opinions and notions, upon which they would be loath to venture their souls in a dying hour. I value more the judgment of a dying saint, about justification, than all the wrangling disputes of learned men.

"It would be miserable dying, if we had not something every way adequate to the demands of the law, to ground our hopes of eternal life upon. We have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God, by the way of Christ's righteousness. The devil, and the law may meet us; yet cannot hinder us from entering into heaven by that righteousness.

"Christ can defend his own truths, when his poor creatures and ministers, who contended for them as well as they could, are laid in the silent dust.

"I wait for a peaceable dismission. I long to see his salvation. The spirit saith, come; and the bride *saith, come.* Come, O come, Lord Jesus; come *quickly!*

"My desire is, that God would do his own will, and glorify his own name, by my life or death: which is the best disposal of me, that God himself can make."

[When rising he said] "To rise for a little time, is but a sorry rising: but to rise so, as never to go to bed more, is a glorious resurrection. Then we shall be for ever with the Lord.

"It is well for us, that our souls do not stand upon the same terms with God, as our bodies do; for they must die; but eternal life possesseth the soul, and will never leave it."

[To one who said, "Sir, your death will be a great stroke; I know not any likely to stand up in your room:" He answered,]

"God can make the want of ordinances, the greatest ordinance to you.

"If God keeps his truths alive in the hearts of some few serious Christians, they will preach one to another.

"I bless God, for what he hath done for my soul. I give up my body to him; let him do with it what he pleases.

"How soon is nature overset by the God of nature, if the God of grace doth not stand by to support it! A finite creature could not endure, if the everlasting arms were not underneath.

"Though they would not suffer me to preach the gospel of free grace quietly; yet God suffers me to die in the comfort of it.

"As for my going, God can make it no loss to you. God can take off and set on his own workmen, when he pleases.

"I have done with all other satisfaction, but what God in Christ can give.

"We live but dying lives in the body. They are but short recoveries which we have at any time, until mortality is swallowed up of life."

[When he was removed to the other side of the bed *he said,*] "*This is* but turning from one side to another.

but I would fain turn from the dark side to the light side. One turn more, and then I shall be at rest."

Men often go to God in duties, with their faces towards the world: and, when their bodies are on the mount of ordinances, their hearts will be found at the foot of the hill, going after their covetousness. *Boston.*

Attend diligently on ordinances; yet, beware of putting ordinances in God's stead. Hath not thy heart said, "I will go and hear such a man, and get comfort, and get strength?" No wonder that you find yourself weak, barren, and unfruitful. How should means and ministers help thy soul, except the Lord help? Christ himself keeps the key of his wine-celler. His ministering servants cannot so much as make you drink, when you come to his house, and therefore, poor soul, stop not short of Christ; but press through all the crowd of ordinances, and ask to see Jesus, to speak with Jesus, and to touch him: so will virtue come out from him to thee. *Gurnall.*

Evil tempers are but the symptoms of our spiritual disease; and evil works are but the scales of the leper. Hateful as they are, they only indicate that inward, moral leprosy, of original depravation, which hath vitiated and corrupted the whole mass of our fallen nature. *Haweis.*

The power of original sin is not always very discernible in children and young persons: but, sometimes, lies hid, under the cover of decent civility, and seeming innocence. But, alas! all the offspring of Adam are deeply infected. They are like young lions, which do not discover much of their native fierceness at first. But, if they live long enough for time to let their teeth and claws grow, they will quickly give proof of the savage nature they brought into the world with them. *ibid.*

Adam's sin corrupted man's nature, and leavened the *whole* lump of mankind. We putrefied in Adam, as our *root.* The root was poisoned, and so the branches were *invenomed.* Boston.

As a whole nest of venomous creatures must needs be

more dreadful, than any few of them that come creeping forth; so the sin of thy nature, that mother of abominations, must be worse than any particular lusts, that appear stirring in thy heart and life. *ibid.*

If conscience be as a thousand witnesses, the all-seeing God is as a thousand consciences. *Arrowsmith.*

My hopes, from appearances, are cold. My faith has no bed to sleep upon, but God's omnipotency. *Rutherfoord.*

You must be going either to heaven or hell. You cannot go two ways at once.

In point of acceptance with God, there is but one and the same way, for the saint and the sinner, the oyster-woman and the philosopher; even the blood and obedience of God's co-equal Son. *Ryland.*

You may have heard of some persons, condemned to execution, who, at the scaffold, have been so obdurate and stiff-necked, that not a cry, nor a tear came from them; yet, just as they have been going to lay their necks upon the block, when a pardon has come, and they were at once discharged from guilt, imprisonment, and death; they, that could not weep a tear before, no sooner see the pardon sealed and themselves acquitted, than they dissolve into tears of joy, thankfulness, and surprise.—So it is with believers. The more they see Christ in the pardon of sin, and the love of God in Christ to receive and embrace them, the more they melt. *Crisp.*

First, souls look to Christ, by faith, for pardon through his blood; and then they mourn for sins pardoned: and never do they mourn better and more kindly, or are more ashamed and confounded because of their sins, than when they are most satisfied that God is pacified towards them for all that they have done. *Gill.*

To be over-thrifty in our expenses upon God [whether of time, money, or labour,] is the worst piece of husbandry in the world. *Arrowsmith.*

The grass and pasture are so sweet, that Christ hath *put a believer into,* that though there were no bounds *to keep in such* a soul, yet it would never go out of this *fat pasture, to* feed in a barren common. Cri

We have lately repaired, or rather erected anew, the church, dedicated to St. Paul's name: but some of us have pulled down and demolished his doctrines. Our church celebrates that apostle's conversion; but many of us seem to renounce what he hath delivered concerning grace, conversion, and regeneration. *Edwards.*

Paul was Nero's prisoner, but Nero was much more God's: and, while God had work for Paul, he found him friends both in court and prison. *Gurnall.*

When peace is concluded between nations that were before at war, trading is revived. So will it be between God and you: commerce will be revived, and you will be trading into heaven [by prayer and repeated acts of faith,] and bring away rich treasures of grace and comfort. *Manton.*

A man that is at peace with God, will be often in God's company. *ibid.*

Some do, in this life, conceit that they are already perfect. The way by which God cures this phrenzy of pride, we have in these days seen to be somewhat like that in Nebuchadnezzar, namely, to give them the heart of a beast; I mean, by suffering them, for a time, to fall into gross, beastly practices: herein shewing them, how far they are from that perfection they dreamed of so vainly. *Gurnall.*

What need a child fear, though the whole house be full of rods, seeing not one of them can move, without the father's hand? *Dodd.*

If evil had never been permitted, the wisdom of God could not have appeared in over-ruling it; nor his justice, in punishing it; nor his mercy, in forgiving it; nor his power, in subduing it. *Gifford.*

The cold water of persecution is often thrown on the Church's face, to fetch her to herself, when she is in a swoon.

Humanly speaking, it is harder to work savingly on a *pharisee*, than on a libertine. The former hath more *to forego*, than the latter. The profane person hath but *his lust to deny*; the other hath his duties to renounce.

and a long train of seeming graces. Oh, how difficult is it to persuade such an one to alight and hold Christ's stirrup, whilst he and all his patched up performances are made as dust under Christ's footstool. *Gurnall.*

If a pharisee can but get a few husks of outward duties to feed upon, and muster up a few rags of self righteousness to throw over his back, he is presently as proud as Lucifer. *Gill.*

We should despise none, but honour all; and be as ready to do them good, as the hand is ready to sooth the eye when it smarts, or ease the head when it aches.

I live upon forgiveness; and stand in need of washing every moment. *Anon.*

God lets the wicked have their portion beforehand, i. e. in the present life; Psalm xvii. Luke vi. 24. and xvi. 25. A wicked man may give God an acquittance and write upon it, "Received in full." But the saints reward is in reversion: the robe and the ring are yet to come.

The richest are oftentimes the poorest, and the poorest are oftentimes the richest. Oh, how many thread bare souls are there to be found under silken coats and purple robes! *Dyer.*

I have sometimes thought, that that change which passes upon the hearts of God's people at the instant of death, or will pass upon living saints at the time I speak of [i. e. the time of Christ's second coming;] when hearts, so full of sinful lust, pollution, and all wickedness will be at once cleared of all; is a greater evidence and display of the power of God, than the change that passes upon their bodies; either at their resurrection, or at this time. *Gill.*

The longer a believer hath neglected prayer, the harder he finds it to pray; partly, through shame: for, the soul, having played the truant, knows not how to look God in the face: and, partly, through the difficulty of the work, which is doubly hard to what another finds, who walks *in the* exercise of his graces. It requires more *time and pains for* him to tune his instrument, when all

is out of order, than for another to play the lesson. *Gurnall.*

Prayer, like Jonathan's bow, returns not empty. Never was faithful prayer lost at sea. No merchant trades with such certainty, as the praying saint. Some prayers, indeed, have a longer voyage than others; but then return with the richer lading at last. *ibid.*

Who can express the powerful oratory of a believer's prayer? This little word, (father) lisped forth in prayer by a child of God, exceeds the eloquence of Demosthenes, Cicero, and all the most famous orators in the world—we knock at heaven, and the heart of God flies open. *ibid.*

The Christian is compared to a tree, Psalm i. and those trees flourish most, and bear the sweetest fruit, which stand most in the sun. The praying Christian is (as they say of Rhodians) *in sole positus:* he stands nigh unto God, and hath God nigh unto him, in all that he calls upon him for: you may, therefore, expect his fruit to be sweet and ripe. When another, that stands, as it were, in the shade, and at a distance from God, through neglect of prayer, will have little fruit found on his branches, and that but green and sour. *ibid.*

Faith holds a distinguished place among the Christian graces, and prayer among the duties. Without faith no other grace can be exercised, and without prayer other duties are performed in vain. A proper acquaintance with the nature of prayer would tend to remove our backwardness to that duty, and incline us to engage in it. Suitably performed it is most advantageous to the Christian, and like a well-fitted key opens the rich store-house of divine mercy. It confers the highest honour and dignity, as it introduces us into the presence of God, and admits to immediate intercourse with him. A believing application to the throne of grace is the source of great sweetness and consolation to the Christian. It mitigates his sorrows, delivers *from distraction*, and quiets the mind.

This great duty was often the subjects of discourse,

both when Christ spake publicly to the multitude and privately to his disciples: with a view to engage them in this duty, he explained the nature of it, pointed out the advantages, and directed as to the manner of performing it. Above all things, it was his aim to bring them to faith and importunity.

He spake a parable to this end, that men should pray always, and not faint. While with authority he enjoined them to pray, he encouraged them by his example. If that duty was so necessary and useful to him in his humbled and tried state, it could not but be necessary and profitable to them. *Anon.*

Importunity in prayer is a combination of gracious affections working in the heart, and flowing out to God in fervent desire for the blessing. There is an infinite difference between pertinent expression, and importunate desires. Many address God in such language as awaken the affections of others, while their own hearts are cold and frozen. Those only, who are experimentally acquainted with importunity can form any proper idea of it, and even those cannot express what they feel. The scriptures give various descriptions of importunity in prayer, both to open up the nature of it, and make the tried Saint know that others have been reduced to equal extremity. It is called a wrestling with God, and refusing to let him go without the blessing; a stirring up ourselves to take hold of him, and giving him no rest; never holding our peace, day nor night, and not keeping silence; a pouring out the heart and laying it open before God.

It is often exemplified: Jacob wrestled, Moses cried, and David roared, and made a noise. Christ himself was most fervent and importunate "in the days of his "flesh, when he offered up prayers and supplications "with strong crying and tears unto him that was able "to save him from death." It is altogether opposed to cold languid desires, and heart wandering. The soul collects *herself*, brings every faculty into action, and *with united energy* makes fervent application to God.

With the eye of the mind fixed on the blessing, the importunate believer strongly desires it; his hope is filled with expectation, and faith urges the divine promise. The affections unite with the other faculties of the soul, and all that is within the believer is stirred up to seek the Lord. *ibid.*

If our minds be unfixed and wander in prayer, it is the work only of the tongue and lips, which makes it in God's account no better than vain babbling; and it will be unreasonable to expect that God should attend and grant those suits of ours, which we do not at all consider ourselves, and which do not engage our own hearts. *ibid.*

They who know the pleasure of conversing with God need no arguments to bring them to their closet. Prayer is a pleasant duty; and if it seem otherwise to us, it is from some distemper of our hearts, which, like a sick palate, cannot relish the most pleasant meat. *ibid.*

Can men call him a Deity to whom they will not attribute so much as they do to every ingenious man, the honour of being good company? This is not only to be prophane, but to be absurd. *ibid.*

We seldom find much relish in human conversation till we arrive to some degree of freedom; they that converse as strangers, are under constraint and uneasiness; and certainly the main cause of that disgust men have to a spiritual intercourse with God, is their want of familiarity with it. *ibid.*

Great is the power of prayer. The conversion of sinners, and the edification of Saints, will generally bear proportion to the fervent wrestlings of God's people. It is a certain symptom of revival, when a spirit of prayer is poured out from on high. When the clouds thicken the rain approaches. On the other hand, it is a sure test of a declining Church, when a spirit of prayer is restrained. Christ delights to be entreated. When Church-members have no employment for him, he begins to go away. When those from whom the merchant can have any expectations are gone, and only

few children amusing themselves in the market place, he considers exposing his wares any longer as only a loss of time, and resolves to depart. *ibid.*

The grace of God mollifies the heart, sweetens the temper, polishes the manners, dignifies the character, and beautifies the conversation more efficaciously than all the fine arts of the world. Christianity promotes civility, and civility recommends Christianity. In Paul we discern the understanding of a man, the candour of a Christian, the intrepidity of a hero, and the breeding of a courtier. I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak the words of truth and soberness. *ibid.*

God's children are like stars that shine brightest in the darkest night; like torches, that are the better for beating; like grapes, that come not to the proof till they come to the press; like young trees that root the faster for shaking; like vines, that grow the better for bleeding; like gold, that looks the brighter for scouring; like glow worms, that shine best in the dark; like juniper, that smells sweetest in the fire; like the pomander, which becomes more fragrant for chaffing; like the palm tree, which proves the better for pressing; like the cammomile, which the more you tread on it the more you spread it. God knoweth that they are best when they are worst, and live holiest when they die fastest; and therefore he frames his dealings with their dispositions, seeking rather to profit than to please. *ibid.*

Afflictions, like Lot's angels, will move as soon as they have done their errand; like plasters, when the sore is once whole, they will fall off of their own accord. *ibid.*

The wisdom of God appears in afflictions; by these he separates the sin, which he hates, from the son whom he loves; by these thorns he keeps him from breaking over into Satan's pleasant pastures, which fatten him indeed, but only to the slaughter. *ibid.*

How strange is formality in such a business as prayer! which is an address to the living God, one of the most *solemn acts of the soul*; yea, we may call it the most *natural act of a Christian*, like the breathing of the *child after the breast*! Alas! it is sad that many times

this seems rather a piece of invention than a matter of earnest with the Lord; not so much the breathing of the soul after him, as the expressing what should be our desires! O to what class can such a piece of atheism be reduced as appears in our nearest approaches to God! Should we look on prayer as a duty, and not consider it as a singular enjoyment also, without which this earth would have a near appearance of hell, if we could not thus solace the soul in God, and get a vent under its greatest pressures. O prayer! what thought should we have of it if the truth thereof were more believed! I think that man who is sure of the being and faithfulness of God, and of the reality of prayer, needs not be solicitous with what face the world looks on him, when thus his great interest and encouragement are secure, and a well is at hand that can answer all his complaints.

Fleming.

Heartless, lifeless, wordy prayer, the fruit of convictions and gifts, or of custom and outward occasions, however multiplied, and whatever devotion they seem to be accompanied withal, will never engage spiritual affections to them. *Owen.*

It is an astonishing thing to see, how, under frequency of prayer and a seeming fervency therein, many of us are at a stand as to visible thriving in fruits of grace, and it is to be feared without any increase of strength in the root of it; and, which is yet more astonishable, men abide in the duty of prayer, and that in constancy, in their families and otherwise, and yet live in known sins: and the fault and guilt is wholly their own, who have effected a consistency between a way in sinning and a course in praying: and it ariseth from hence, that they have never laboured to fill up their requests with grace. No man was ever absolutely prevailed on by sin, who prayed for deliverance according to the mind of God. Every praying man that perisheth was an hypocrite: *the faithfulness* of God in his promises will not allow *us to judge* otherwise. For men to be earnest in pray*er and thrift*less in grace, is a certain indication of pre-

valent corruptions, and want of being spiritually-minded in prayer itself. He who prays as he ought will endeavour to live as he prays. To pray earnestly and live carelessly, is to proclaim that a man is not spiritually-minded in his prayer. We may hear prayers sometimes that openly discover themselves to spiritual sense to be the labour of the brain by the help of gifts, in memory and invention, without any evidence of any mixture of humility, reverence, or godly fear, without any acting of faith and love: they flow as wine, yet smell and taste of the unsavoury cask from whence they proceed.

Owen.

It were to be wished this great means of prayer, yet left to the church, were with more singleness and fervour improved, both by the Christian alone, and in converse with others. This is well known in the most dark and dismal times of her condition, what marvellous help it hath brought at a choke, when it hath seemed in some manner the last effort of the church, and all other things gone. O a spirit of prayer! what remarkable advantage hath followed upon this! Thus hath the meanest of the saints access to do a great piece of service, even to the church universal, and the recovery again of the power of godliness, that is now so far gone. *Fleming.*

If you know the principles of prayer, and have a lively sense of your necessities, and hearty desire of God's grace and mercy, you will be able to pray without forms, and your affections will bring forth words out of the fulness of your heart; and you will not be over solicitous and timorous about words; for, doubtless, the Spirit, who is the help to us in speaking to men, will also much more help us to speak to God, if we desire it: and God regards not eloquent words, nor artificial composure; neither need we regard it in private prayer. If you limit yourselves to forms, you will thereby grow formal, and limit the Spirit. *Marshal.*

The richest saint must be (and is) *a humble beggar at grace's door all his days*; and Christ is the Lord of the

house, and the dispenser of the alms: and as the alms is too good not be to patiently waited for, so the Lord is too good and too great to be quarrelled with; and never did a believer get any good by complaining of him. Complain to him and pray and ask largely, but still with faith and patience. Knock at his door, but stay and bless him that ever he gave you any crumbs of his grace: mix your prayers for new wanted grace with praises for his old dispensed grace. Christ loveth you, and hath proved it. Believe it, and bless him for it, and wait for his renewing his love to you; and in due time you will find that he will not only answer but out-do your desires to him, and all your expectations from him.

Trail.

Do not say you cannot pray because you cannot speak much, or well, or long. Praying is wrestling with God; the heart is the wrestler; holy faith is the strength of it: if by means of this strength thy heart be a good wrestler, though thou art ever so tongue-tied, thou wilt be a prevailer. Rhetoric goes for little in the heavenly court, but sincere groans have a kind of omnipotency.

Burgess.

Prayer is chiefly a heart work: God heareth the heart without the mouth, but never heareth the mouth acceptably without the heart. Your prayer is odious hypocricy, mocking God, and taking his name in vain, when you utter petitions for the coming of his kingdom and the doing his will, and yet hate holiness in your heart. This is lying unto God, and flattering him with your lips; but no true prayer; and so God takes it.

Marshal.

To pray in the name of Christ is to pray in the faith of his name: we may pray with the name of Christ in our mouths, and yet not pray in his name, unless we pray with the faith of Christ in our hearts. *Anon.*

Right believing is powerful praying: the knees, eyes, and tongue, bear the least share in prayer; the whole of *the work lies* upon the soul, and particularly upon faith *in the soul,* which is indeed the life and soul of prayer.

Faith can pray without words; but the most elegant words, the phrase of angels, is not worthy to be called prayer without faith. *Shaw.*

Our prayers should run parallel to promises; we should ask nothing of God but what we have an intimation he will do for us: our needs and necessities would not be sufficient arguments; but the principal argument is the word of God. Finding a promise in the word, faith fixes there, and presseth God from it; and a believer so praying cannot be denied, unless God deny himself. The word of God is himself; it is his will: so the soul may go with a holy boldness unto God; for the thing that is promised is half done. God may keep us in suspense a while; but he expects we should live upon the word, and hang on it till the time of the promise comes. All that faith labours for is to work the soul to assurance that God will deal with us according to his word. And if I can make it out that such a promise belongs to me I have enough to live on. *Cole.*

When a man is assured God hath given him his Son, he will then easily be induced to believe and expect, how shall he not with him give me all things? If once he looks upon God as a Father, he will then easily conceive what Christ says, If fathers that are evil can give good things to their children, how much more shall your Father give his Spirit to them that ask him? and if he gave his Son when we did not pray to him, how much more shall he with him give us all things we pray for? *Goodwin.*

In trading, he gets most by his commodity, that can forbear his money the longest: so does the Christian, that can with most patience stay for a return to his prayer. Such a soul shall never be ashamed of it's waiting. *Gurnall.*

The gift of prayer may have praise from men; but it is the grace of prayer, that has power with God. *Dyer.*

Pray for them thou lovest. Thou wilt never have *my comfort of his* friendship, for whom thou dost not *pray.*

Prayer is a key, which, being turned by the hand of faith, unlocks all God's treasures. *Crip. Lect.*

In prayer, it is better to have an heart, without words, than words without an heart. *Bunyan.*

To say, in compliment, "I am a sinner;" is easy: but to cry with the publican indeed, "God be merciful to me a sinner," is the hardest prayer in the world. *Wilcox.*

"God be merciful, in Christ, to me a sinner," are fit to be the last dying words of the greatest saint that lives. *Gallatin.*

A good woman used to say, that "A family without prayer is like an house without a roof, exposed to all the injuries of weather, and to every storm that blows." *Lyon.*

Prayer is the breath of a regenerate man. *Gill.*

What we win by prayer, we shall wear with comfort. *Dodd.*

Either praying will make a man leave off sinning, or sinning will make him leave off praying. *ibid.*

Sometimes, when I have thought I did no good [by the sermons I have preached,] then I did the most of all: and, at other times, when I thought I should catch people, I have fished for nothing. *Bunyan.*

The word preached, is like Samson's riddle; we cannot unfold it, without God's heifer. *Gurnall.*

My preaching is not like sending an arrow from a bow (to which some strength of arm is requisite;)but like pulling the trigger of a gun ready charged, which the feeblest finger can do. *Hervey.*

Mr. Owen, on being lately told, that he had not talents for preaching, made answer, "I preach the good gospel, if I am not a good gospel-preacher." *Russell.*

The Book of Life, like the tree of life in the garden of Eden, hath a tree of knowledge growing hard by, which cannot with safety be tasted of.—There are some nice and needless questions started, concerning election, which questions ought to be forborne. But these lofty *walls, and* aspiring sons of Anak, should by no means *prevail with* us to act as the unworthy spies, sent by Is-

rael to explore the land of Canaan. We ought not to bring up a bad report, or give credit to any brought up by others, on a land that flows with so much milk and honey, as the doctrine of predestination doth. Not to insist on this doctrine, were to stop up those walls, which the prophets, the apostles (and our Lord Jesus himself,) have digged, in their writings (and ministrations,) for the refreshment of thirsty souls: yea, it would be endeavouring to cancel the first great charter of our salvation. *Arrowsmith.*

The very hairs of your head, says Christ, are all numbered: fear ye not. On which, Austin hath this sweet and pertinent remark: "Thou that cannot lose a single hair, how comes it to pass that thou art afraid of losing thy soul?" *ibid.*

It is not with God, as with carpenters and shipwrights, who build houses for others to dwell in, and vessels for others to sail in, and afterwards take little or no thought about them. God, who made all things for himself, looks to the preservation of all. *ibid.*

The Deity, and the sun, are, in this respect, similar; they cheer and refresh humble, cautious beholders; but put out the eye of such as are too daring, prying, and inquisitive. *Arrowsmith.*

A proud heart and a lofty mountain are never fruitful. *Gurnall.*

If once (like Hezekiah) we call in spectators to see our treasure, and grow proud of our gifts and comforts; then it is high time for God, if he loves us indeed, to send some messengers to carry those away from us, which carry our hearts away from him. *ibid.*

Pride stops up the conduit of divine communications. If the heart begin to swell, it is time for God to hold his hand, and turn the cock: for all that is poured on such a soul runs over into self-applauding; and so becomes as water spilt, in regard of any good it doth the creature or any glory it brings to God. ibid.

"*If God,*" says Mr. Hooker, "should make us an *offer thus large;* "search all the generations of men

If God be your father, you can want nothing that is good: but the determination of what is good, must be left to his wisdom; for we are not so fit to judge of it, nor to discern our own good. We should, therefore, commit all to his fatherly care and wise providence. Indeed, he chuseth rather to profit us, than to please us, in his dispensations: and it is our duty to refer all to his wisdom and faithfulness. *ibid.*

If we trust God for our heavenly inheritance, we may well trust him for our daily maintenance; which he vouchsafeth to the birds of the air, to the beast of the field, and even to his enemies. He that feedeth a kite, will he not feed a child? He that supplies his enemies, will he not take care of his family? You would think that person monstrously cruel, who would feed his dogs and starve his children. This cannot, without blasphemy, be imagined of our gracious and heavenly Father. *ibid.*

The divine providence, which is sufficient to deliver us, in our utmost extremity, is equally necessary to our preservation, in the most peaceful situation. *Newton.*

The providence of God is one strait line, drawn from the point of his decree. A strait line it is, in itself: however crooked it may appear, through a false medium. God will do whatever he pleases: and what pleases him, ought to please us. It is above nature, it is contrary to nature, to make a full surrender of ourselves to his sovereign and absolute will. Grace alone can enable us to say, from the heart, "Thy will be done." *Winter.*

In a musical instrument, when we observe a number of strings set to harmony, we conclude, that some skilful musician had tuned them.

When we see thousands of men in a field, marshalled under their respective colours, all yielding exact obedience; we infer, that there is a general, to whose orders they are subject.

In a watch, when we observe springs and wheels, *great and small*, each so fitted, as to concur to an *orderly motion*, we acknowledge the skill of an artificer.

When we come into a printing-house, and see a vast variety of different letters, so regulated and disposed, as to make a book; we are, at once, convinced, that there is some composer, by whose art they were brought into such a frame.

When we behold a fair building, we conclude it had an architect; and,

When we see a stately ship, completely fitted out, and safely conducted to the port, we know, that it had builders and a pilot.

The visible world is such an instrument, army, watch building, book, and ship, as undeniably proves that God was and is the tuner, general, and artificer, the composer, architect, and pilot of it. *Arrowsmith.*

Saints, when provoked, are, too often, so like sinners, that it is hard to discern any difference. *Anon.*

A cool and cowardly defence of Christian principles, will always embolden the enemies of the gospel, and discourage it's friends. Be resolute for God, or give up his cause. *Ryland.*

It is no wisdom to shuffle with God, by denying his truths, or shifting off our duty, to keep correspondence with men. He is a poor fencer, that lays his soul at open guard to be stabbed and wounded with guilt, while he is lifting up his hands to save a broken head. *Gurnall.*

A million of torches cannot shew us the sun. It can only be seen by it's own light. Nor can all the natural reason in the world discover, either what God is, or what worship he expects, without divine and supernatural revelation from himself. *Arrowsmith.*

Though faith may look upon God, and that with much comfort; yet, for reason to stare too much upon him, is the way to lose her sight. *ibid.*

When reason hath tired and wildered herself in searching after God, the result must be, *non est inventus*; he is not to be found; at least, not by me. *ibid.*

The gospel is a doctrine according to godliness; and *true holiness is the* health, is the happiness of the soul. *These duties*, issuing from faith, and recommended by

the intercession of Christ, are acceptable to the divine majesty. But these are not your Saviour. God hath not reconciled the world to himself, by their own pious practices, but by his Son Jesus Christ.

If ever a [true and lasting] reformation [of manners] is produced; it must, under the influences of the eternal spirit, be produced by the doctrines of free grace, and justification through the Redeemer's righteousness. Until these doctrines are generally inculcated, the most elegant harangues from the pulpit, or the most correct dissertations from the press, will be no better than a pointless arrow and a broken bow. *Hervey.*

An heathen could say, when a bird (scared by an hawk) flew into his bosom for refuge, "I will not kill thee, nor betray thee to thy enemy, seeing thou fliest to me for sanctuary." Much less will God either slay, or give up, the soul, that takes sanctuary in his name!

There are two principles, in a man that is born again; a principle of corrupt nature, and a principle of grace: the one is called, the old man; and the other the new. The old man continues unregenerate, to the last. No part in him is regenerated. He remains untouched, and is just the same he was, only deprived of his power and dominion. The new man is wholly regenerate. There is no unregenerate part in him. There is no sin in him, nor done by him: "he cannot sin, because he is born of God." "The king's daughter is all glorious within." [See *Rom.* vii. 17.] *Gill.*

Regeneration does not come by the will of man, *John* i. 13. As gracious persons did not regenerate themselves, so neither can they convey regenerating grace to others. If they could, a good master would regenerate every servant in his family; a good parent would regenerate every child of his; and a minister of the gospel would regenerate all that sit under his ministry. But they can do no more than pray, and use the means. *God only* can do the work. *ibid.*

A child, as soon as born, having all it's limbs, *is a perfect man*, as to parts, though they are not yet at their

full growth and size. So the new man, or gracious principle infused in regeneration, is a perfect man at once, as to parts; though, as yet, not arrived to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. *ibid.*

As Christ's resurrection was a declaration of his being the Son of God; so, regeneration is an evidence of interest in the adoption of children. Likewise, as the resurrection of Christ was by the almighty power of God; so, is the regeneration and quickening of a dead sinner. And as Christ's resurrection was the first step to his glorification; so is regeneration, to seeing and entering into the kingdom of God. *ibid.*

Dost thou pray with all thy might? then, though thy might be weak in itself, and in thine own apprehension such, yet because it is all the might thou hast, and which grace hath in thee, it shall be accepted: for God accepteth according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not. *Goodwin.*

Our whole life should speak nothing but thankfulness; every condition and place we are in should be a witness of our thankfulness: this will make the times and places we live in the better for us. When we ourselves are monuments of God's mercy, it is fit we should be patterns of his praises, and leave monuments to others. We should think life is given to us to do something better than to live in: we live, not to live; our life is not the end of itself, but the praise of the Giver. God hath joined his glory and our happiness together: it is fit that we should refer all that is good to his glory, who hath joined his glory to our best good in being glorified in our salvation. Praise is a just and due tribute for all God's blessings; for what else do the best favours of God especially call for at our hands? How do all creatures praise God but by our mouths? It is a debt always owing, and always paying; and the more we pay, the more we shall owe: upon the due discharge of this debt, the soul will find much peace. A thankful *heart to God for his* blessings is the greatest blessing of *all. Were it not for* a few gracious souls, what honour

should God have of the rest of the unthankful world? which should stir us up the more to be trumpets of God's praises in the midst of his enemies; because this (in some sort) hath a prerogative above our praising God in heaven; for there God hath no enemies to dishonour him. *Sibs.*

Then doth a man eat and drink to the glory of God, when, confessing that he is unworthy to enjoy this life and the comforts of it, he praiseth the bounty of God which bestows all things abundantly upon him; and principally admires the immense love of the Lord Jesus, who willingly sustained the want of all things delightful, and suffered himself to have vinegar and gall given him to drink, that it might be granted to those that are his by the divine favour to eat the fat and drink the sweet: when also he doth not so much delight in the creature and the gift as in the Creator and giver, tasting with his utmost delight how sweet the Lord is: when from his heart he resolves to lay out that life which by these means is lengthened out, and all those faculties which are so continually preserved, in the service of God who gave and preserves them: lastly, when, from the pleasures of this natural life, he ascends by meditation nigh unto those incredible delights of the future heavenly life, and, tasting them in his thoughts by faith, with a grateful mind he sings a song of love unto God: O Lord! if thou dost such great things for us in prison, what wilt thou do in the palace! *Witsius.*

Learn to value spiritual blessings and temporal likewise, not by the things themselves, but by the love of God from which they came. A small blessing may be out of the abundance of love: God may abound in love to thee in bestowing it, when the blessing in the matter of it is but little. What is the reason that many good souls, who have true grace wrought in their hearts, are so very unthankful? they look to the grace *wrought in* them, and see there is but little of that; *and they* value all by what they find in themselves, by

the blessing wrought; I find but little in me, if any at all: and while they thus value the blessing by what they find in themselves, they prove unthankful unto God. Whereas that little grace thou hast, that little faith, be it but as a grain of mustard-seed, it proceeds out of abundance of grace in God. God abounds infinitely in his love to thee, when thou hast but the least beginnings of grace in thee, as small at first as Nicodemus had. *Goodwin.*

Let all seen enjoyments lead you to the unseen fountain from whence they flow. Never rest upon any thing you have, without you see God in it; and then be sure you rest not upon the enjoyment, but upon that God who manifests himself by it; for the enjoyment will quickly be gone, but the fountain will remain. *Halyburton.*

Where grace is, there will be no eminent mercy gotten with much struggling, but there will be a particular thankful remembrance of it a long while after with much enlargement; and as prayer abounded, so will thanksgiving abound also. Great blessings, that are won with prayer, are worn with thankfulness: such a man will not ask new, but he will withal give thanks for old. Thankfulness, proceeds from pure grace. Prayer and thanks are like the double motion of the lungs: the air that is sucked in by prayer is breathed forth again by thanks. *Goodwin.*

It is good to see blessings as they isue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing to see the love and favour of God in it, which is more to be valued than the blessing itself. *Sibs.*

No mercy hath been more endeared than what hath broken out of the thickest cloud, or more full and sweet than what hath come after much patience and continued wrestlings. *Fleming.*

Faith's discovery of forgiveness in God, though it have no present sense of its own peculiar interest therein, is the great supportment of a sin-perplexed soul. Owen.

Often the clearest day ends in a cloudy stormy night. Many enjoying the richest privileges, and making the purest profession, have cast the Lord's cords from them, and apostatized from the good cause they had espoused. Their lamps, not fed by the oil of grace, are extinguished by the wind of temptation. The naughtiness of their hearts, long latent, breaks forth and discovers their true character. We have a striking instance of this in Judas. Having long followed Christ, and professed an unfeigned attachment to his interest, at last he betrayed him. The same causes produce the same effects. The dreadful treachery and fatal end of Judas are recorded, to warn nominal professors to the end of time. *Anon.*

Being God's jewels, saints may well be resigned under the sharpest afflictions. The design of these is to polish and make them up. The hotter the furnace, the more admirable a sight is the saint while in it; and the more beautiful an object when brought out. Angels behold them with pleasure and wonder. They learn from the saints the manifold wisdom of God, and the astonishing power of his grace, which is invincible indeed. If saints themselves know not now what God is doing, they shall know hereafter.

If saints are God's jewels, sinners are God's lumber. If a man apprehends that any valuable article has fallen by among his lumber, he tosses it about, if perhaps that valuable article may be found: and when sure that there is nothing valuable among it, he gives up all further care about it, and reckons it rather cumbersome than advantageous: and, if he is about to move to another place, he commonly commits it to the flames.

God tosses about his lumber seeking out his jewels. Nations undergo revolutions, that Zion may be saved, and termed "sought out and not forsaken." He overturns, overturns, overturns, till he come, whose right it is. Families are moved from place to place, that *certain individuals* in them, may be brought to the gospel *and saved*. In every tossing, a wise and unerring hand

casts the lumber to such a place, that the jewels may be found;—when these are all made up, the vast mass of lumber will be cast into the fire that cannot be quenched. *ibid.*

Divine threatenings, however severe they may appear, are a great mercy. There can scarcely be a greater mercy than to warn men of their danger. Were any person about to fall headlong from the brink of a precipice, no kinder office could be performed than to warn him of his danger, and use every possible means to prevent his ruin. Sinners are on the brink of eternal ruin. While out of Christ there is nothing between them and hell but the breath of their nostrils. When such as love not Christ are pronounced accursed, it is like the call given by Lot to his sons-in-law, Gen. xix. 14. If there is great wrath in this curse, 1st. Cor. xv. 22. gospel hearers have the more need to consider and lay down the weapons of their rebellion. While this and such texts stand in the Bible, sinners, in a land of light, can never pretend that they are not properly warned; if they read, they are warned: if not, they increase their sin by neglecting that which is at once their duty and their privilege. *ibid.*

The holy spirit carries on the Redeemer's work as a spirit of supplication. He is promised in this character, as well as a spirit of grace. There is no way in which we can so much promote Christ's interest as by fervent prayer and wrestling. This engages divine favour and faithfulness. When the Lord is about to appear in his glory and build Zion, he will hear the prayer of the destitute. Prayer is to God's work, what the hands of Moses were to Israel when joined against Amalek. The most useful in a church and congregation is not the most talkative busy professor, who runs about as if every thing depended on his head and mouth, his hands and feet; but the poor hidden believer who frequents his closet, and will neither go away without the blessing for himself, nor for Zion's sake hold his peace—great is the power of prayer. *ibid.*

Moral suasion of itself will never change the heart, or bring a sinner to Christ. The Scriptures expressly assert this. They assure us that no man cometh unto Christ unless the Father draw him. We have many proofs in fact. Christ was infinitely able to argue. He was well acquainted with all the arts of persuasion; but "no man received his testimony." Paul had every possible advantage. He had excellent natural abilities, much literature, and great grace. He received his acquired endowments at the feet of Gamaliel, and made such progress as made some conclude that much learning had made him mad. He received his gracious qualifications in the third heavens. But with all these attainments he could never persuade, or change a single heart. Not accompanied with divine power, his best discourses, adapted in every respect to his hearers, instead of bringing sinners to Christ, exposed him to the contemptuous titles of a babbler, a setter forth of strange Gods, and an insignificant creature, rude in speech.

ibid.

Moral suasion never did, and never will produce love to Christ in the carnal heart, which is enmity. The utmost which the best reasoning can do in this matter is, to produce a cold, dry, uninfluencing light in the head, and some transient uneasy emotions in the conscience; while the heart itself is left hard as the nether millstone. Sin is too strong for the best arguments. The hearts of men are fully set in them to do evil. The heart is dead, dark, shut, and makes positive exertions to keep out the light. The old man fights hard for his own safety, and the enjoyment of his lusts. If he appears at any time to yield, it is only a kind of ill formed resolution, and insincere promise to repent at some future period, and convenient season. The resolutions and engagements of the unrenewed heart are like those of one half awake. He promises to rise, but instead of *performing*, instantly falls faster asleep. *ibid.*

In explaining this terror, 2 Cor. v. 11. it is of the last *importance* to observe that it is the terror of the Lord.

His wrath is infinitely superior to the wrath of all the creatures. However terrible it may be to be given over to Satan, that tormenter, it can never be compared with "falling into the hands of the living God," justly incensed and taking vengeance. He can torment his enemies in a short space, more than *all* the creatures could do to eternity, and he takes the punishment of his enemies into his own hands. Every divine perfection makes the future punishment of sinners awfully great. Through partiality, creature punishment is often improper. God is just, and exactly proportions the punishment to the crime. Impotent creatures often are unable to inflict the punishment they meditate and design. Their malice is superior to their power. An omnipotent God is able to inflict that which he knows to be just. Among the creatures one punishment is often exchanged for another. God is of one mind. He is immutable and inexorable; and the sinner shall never again see his face in mercy.

But something still more awful is implied, when it is called the terrors of the Lord. It is the terror of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, as is evident from the foregoing verse. The Apostle asserts that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: and immediately adds, Knowing the terrors of the Lord—It is the terror of HIM who, though equal with God, took our nature upon him, and laid down his life for sinners. It is the terror of him who *could* have saved the chief of sinners, of him who *would* have saved them, who often *invited* them and *complained* when they would not comply. Who gave the most gracious assurance, that whosoever would, might come; and whoever came would not be cast off. It is the terror of the *Lamb* who offered himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice in the room of sinners. It is the terror of him who appointed the means of grace, for gathering sinners to himself; and promises to accompany them with his spirit and gracious *presence to* make them effectual; and whose *spirit every impenitent* gospel-hearer in some measure

quenches. It will be an essential part of their punishment to be judged, condemned, and consigned to everlasting torments by HIM who did so much for sinners, who strives so much with themselves, and whom they treated with such contempt. *ibid.*

Regeneration is an irresistible act of God's grace: no more resistance can be made to it, than there could be, in the first matter, to it's creation; or in a dead man, to his resurrection; or in an infant, to it's generation. Whatever aversion, contrariety, or opposition there may be to it, in the corrupt nature of man; it is all speedily and easily overcome, by the power of divine grace, when the stony heart is taken away, and an heart of flesh given. *Gill.*

Adhering to, and glorying in, the cross of Christ, you shall enter the harbour of eternal rest; not like a ship-wrecked mariner, cleaving to some broken plank, and hardly escaping the raging waves: but like some stately vessel, with all her sails expanded, and riding before a prosperous gale. *Hervey.*

As in a pair of compasses, one foot is fixed in the centre, while the other wanders about in the circumferance; so must the soul stay on Christ, while we search after evidences and additional comforts. *Manton.*

(May not the same thought be accommodated to the contrary propensities of the old man and the new?) Thou sayest, perhaps, that thou canst not believe, that thou canst not repent. Go to Christ, with thy impenitency and unbelief, to get faith and repentance from him. Tell Christ, "Lord! I have brought no righteousness, no grace, to be accepted for, or justified by. I am come for thy righteousness; and I must have it." *Wilcox.*

The word religion is derived *à religando*, signifying to tie or bind: because, by true religion, men's souls are tied and fastened to the Supreme Being. *Arrowsmith.*

To maintain, as most unconverted men do, that any *person* may be saved, in an ordinary course (for I med-

dle not with extraordinary dispensations, but leave the secrets of God to himself,) by any religion whatever, provided he live up to the principles of it; is to turn the whole world into an Eden, and to find a tree of life in every garden, as well as in the paradise of God. *ibid.*

Had I all the faith of the patriarchs, all the zeal of the prophets, all the good works of the apostles, all the holy sufferings of the martyrs, and all the glowing devotion of the seraphs; I would disclaim the whole, in point of dependance, and count all but dross and dung, when set in competition with the infinitely precious death and infinitely meritorious righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Hervey.*

As blind Bartimæus threw away his cloak, when he came to Christ; so must we throw off, i. e. disclaim, renounce, and withdraw every degree of confidence from our own righteousness, if we would be justified in the sight of God. *Parr.*

The difference between true and false repentance, is as great, as that between the running of water in the paths after a violent shower, and the streams which flow from a living fountain. A false repentance has grief of mind, and humiliation, only for great and glaring offences; or until it supposes pardon for them obtained: true repentance is a continued war against sin, a permanent, inward shame for its defilements, until death sounds the retreat. *Venn.*

There is no coming at the fair haven of eternal glory, without sailing through the narrow strait of repentance. *Dyer.*

It is Christ, that grants repentance unto life, Acts v. 31. And, if ever you will repent, with a kind repentance, you must either have it from Christ, or go without it. *Crisp.*

Repentance includes self-abhorrence: as a man not only loathes poison, but the very dish or vessel that smells of it, *Ezek.* xxix. 43. *Brookes.*

The reproaches of Christ are precious. It is better to *be preserved in brine*, than rot in honey. Dyer.

Reproach is the soil and dung, whereby God makes his heritage fruitful. *Manton.*

As the sun freezes and congeals the water, not by infusing coldness into it, but by not imparting heat, and by forbearing to shine upon it; so God hardens the reprobate, not by imparting malice, but by not imparting grace, (from St. Austin.)

There are two C's which I will never sacrifice to any man; my conscience and my constitution. *Baker.*

I know, that he who sent me to the West and South, sends me also to the North. I will charge my soul to believe and to wait for him. I will follow his providence; and neither go before it, nor stay behind it. *Rutherfoord.*

Good resolutions (as some call them,) without grace, are like breath upon steel; which quickly flies off and vanishes away. *Crip. Lectures.*

The best way to be even with Satan and his instruments, for all their spite against us, is, by doing as much good as we can, wherever we come. *Gurnall.*

When the flowers in a man's garden die, yet he can delight in his lands and money. Thus a gracious soul, when the creature fades, can rejoice in the unsearchable the unalienable, and the inexhaustible riches of Christ. *Anon.*

There is no part of our dreadful disease and misery, as sinners, for which there is not an all-sufficient remedy, in the perfections which Jesus possesses, and the offices he sustains, for the salvation of his church. *Venn.*

I am no more surprised, that some revealed truths should amaze my understanding, than that the blazing sun should dazzle my eyes. *Hervey.*

If a man strike his hand upon the point of a spear, he hurts not the spear, but his hand: or, if he spurn at a stone, he hurts not the stone, but his foot. So is it, with the despisers of Christ, and the revilers of his gospel. *Parr.*

The revival of evangelical religion in a nation, is, often, *like* a summer-shower; which does not fall equally,

but waters and refreshes one place, and leaves another dry. *Sloss.*

If riches have been your idol, hoarded up in your coffers, or lavished out upon yourselves, they will, when the day of reckoning comes, be like the garment of pitch and brimstone, which is put on the criminal condemned to the flames. *Hervey.*

"I cannot be poor," saith Bernard, "so long as God is rich; for all his riches are mine." *Crip. Lect.*

Are you rich? If you die unconverted, you will be damned.—Are you poor? If you are converted, you are truly rich.—A poor man, without grace, is twice poor, and completely miserable: a rich man, who is a believer, hath a double portion. *Anon.*

This is properly to be righteous overmuch, when we pretend to correct God's law, and add supplements, of our own, to his rule. *Gurnall.*

God by afflictions brings a kind of death into the world, and the pleasures of it, upon the desires and affections of the soul, which renders them unserviceable unto the remainder of defiling lusts and corruptions. This in some indeed endures but for a season, as when in sickness, wants, fears, distresses, losses, sorrows; there is a great appearance of mortification, when yet the strength of sin and the vigour of carnal affections do speedily revive upon the least appearance of relief. But with believers it is not so; but by all their chastisements they are really more and more delivered from the pollutions of sin, and made partakers of God's holiness. God doth by them excite, stir up, and draw forth all the graces of the Spirit into a constant, diligent, and vigorous exercise; and therein the work of cleansing the soul from the pollution of sin is carried on. A time of affliction is the special season for the peculiar exercise of all grace; for the soul can then no otherwise support and relieve itself: for it is cut short or taken off from all other comforts or reliefs, every *sweet thing being* made bitter to it. It must therefore *live not only by faith* and love and delight in God, but

in some sense upon them: for if in their exercise, support and comfort be not obtained, we can have none. Therefore doth such a soul find it necessary to be constantly abounding in the exercise of grace, that it may in any measure be able to support itself under its troubles and sufferings. *Owen.*

O what rare mercies lie often hid under some dark and afflicting providences, even while they are at our hand, and are not seen, from the frowardness of an embittered spirit, that will not let its own eyes see the advantage of such a case; but, as if they did well to be angry against God, will quarrel more at his crossing their humour than observe his tenderness for promoting their real good, and cry against him because he will not undo them! *Fleming.*

It becomes a saint to believe the faithfulness of God to him, according to his covenant, under all afflictions and chastisements. Grace will act like itself at last; and they that trust in the Lord shall never be ashamed. Though God veil his grace, and give us mercies on the point of his sword, yet, when we pass through the fire and the water, he will be with us: but they need good eyes to see the love of God when they are compassed with fire and water; yet it is there: and a gracious soul hath some discerning of this promise in the midst of them, You shall not perish, because I will be with you. So how boldly may a saint enter into these fires, and walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil! God cannot hide his face, his love, from such a faith. A tried faith, that will not let God go, nor entertain an unbelieving thought of him, is a precious faith. God will certainly turn back on such a soul, and manifest his love at last in a glorious manner *Cole.*

Afflictions are very overwhelming sometimes, and would indeed quite sink us, if the word of God did *not speak* comfort to us in and under them It is a sign *of a spiritual* frame, when, in the midst of troubles and *afflictions,* we can find present delight in the word of

God: but when afflictions come, and the word administers no comfort, it is a sign we are in a dead, unbelieving frame, and no way affected with the report the gospel makes of future happiness *ibid.*

Sin hath a life, and that such a life as whereby it not only lives, but rules and reigns in all who are not born of God. By the entrance of grace into the soul it loseth its dominion, but not its being; its rule, but not its life. The utter ruin, destruction, and gradual annihilation of all the remainders of this cursed life of sin is our design and aim in this duty, which is therefore called mortification. The design of this duty, wherever it is in sincerity, is to leave sin neither operation, life, nor being. And this concerns us in all that we are and do: in our duties, in our callings, in our conversation with others, in our retirements, in the frames of our spirits, in our straits, in our mercies, in the use of our enjoyments, in our temptations. If we are negligent unto any occasion, we shall suffer by it. This is our enemy, and this is the war we are engaged in; every mistake, every neglect is perilous. *Owen.*

Sorrow for sin and repentance are by no means to be looked on as separate from the blood and redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ, but as flowing from it, and ordained by God in the hands of the Mediator, who truly gives it, washes it in his own blood, and as the great high priest, offers it with the incense, ointment, and rich perfumes of his own holiness, righteousness, and purity. He promotes, advances, and gives grace, and is continually renewing it. *Rev.* viii. 3, 4. How adorable is that grace of God in Jesus Christ, which hath not only given us the doctrine of repentance, but by his spirit gives the very grace itself! He puts no trust in our own powers of understanding, will, affections, natural conscience, reason, or morality; but only in his own Spirit and grace in his Son. Nor doth he accept our repentance upon its worth, value, and perfection; but *wraps* it up in the rich robes of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so it is pleasing

in his sight. So he does not lessen or derogate from the graciousness of his gospel in imposing such a duty, but he magnifies it by giving so high and admirable a grace and divine power within us *Beverly.*

In true repentance the soul makes full and firm resolutions of new obedience and amendment of life, and such as are ready to issue out into action, and this thro' the grace, power, and assistance of the divine Spirit. *ibid.*

No man can turn to God except he be first turned of God; and after he is turned he repents: so Ephraim saith, After I was converted I repented. The truth is, a repentant sinner first believes that God will do that which he promiseth, namely pardon his sins and take away his iniquity; then he resteth on the hope of it, and from that and for it he leaves sin, and will forsake his old course, because it is displeasing unto God, and will do that which is pleasing and acceptable to him. So that first of all God's favour is apprehended, and remission of sins believed; then, upon that, cometh alteration of life and conversation. *Mod. Divin.*

There is a most excellent suitableness and congruity betwixt repentance and remission of sins, without prejudice to the freedom of God's grace, since God gives repentance as well as requires it, and makes his people what he would have them to be. *Fleming.*

The principal and adequate reason of all divine worship and that which makes it such, is what God is in himself. Because he is, viz. an infinitely glorious, good, wise, holy, powerful, righteous, self-subsisting, self-sufficient, all-sufficient being, the fountain, cause, and author of life and being to all things, and of all that is good in every kind, the first cause, last end, and absolutely sovereign Lord of all, the rest and all-satisfactory reward of all other beings; therefore is he by us to be adored and worshipped with divine and religious worship: hence are we in our hearts, minds, and souls, to *admire, adore,* and love him; his praises are we to *celebrate, him* to trust and fear, and so to resign ourselves

nd all our concerns unto his will and disposal; to egard him with all the acts of our wills and persons, nswerable to the holy properties of his nature. This t is to glorify him as God. *Owen.*

The going forth of the soul by faith unto Christ as he Anointed of the Lord, sent and sealed by the Fa-her to undertake the great work of man's redemption, s a sure evidence of regeneration. *Cole.*

They are few who find it a great business to be eter-nally saved, and have their souls kept under such a weight; to whom the thoughts of a heaven or hell are brought near as undoubted realities, betwixt which there is no middle state after death; but know they must be inhabitants of one or the other. For if such a deep impression as this were on men's souls, could they possibly be so unconcerned in their being sure of the foundation whereon they have so great a venture. Such indeed are a rare sight in this age, whose working out their salvation is with fear and trembling. And most seem so far to be lost in a throng of other things, that this greatest question which can occur in all their life [if they be born again] is laid aside till they are ready to die. O! hath our light thus put us out of seriousness, and giving all diligence, which is so indispensably required of those who mind heaven? Will gifts and a high repute in the church, or a fair shew in the flesh, be a sure evidence to cause rejoicing when once it comes to die? This is a sad subject; and I must say, if the characters of godliness the scripture hath laid down were seriously pondered, there never was an age wherein more professors are like to come short of heaven, and be found in a fundamental delusion about their state, than this is. *Fleming.*

There is a profession of a special kind, which in its own nature is exposed to reproach in the world: they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, 2 *Tim.* iii. 12. There is a being in Christ by *profession, and not living* godly; for there are branches *n the Vine by profession* that bring forth no fruit,

men that have a profession whereby they do not trouble the world, and for which the world will not trouble them, that can go that length in compliance with the world and the ways of it, as that they shall not have one drop of the Spirit of the witness of Christ, which torments the men of the earth. But they that will live godly, that is, engage in a profession that shall on all occasions and in all instances manifest the power of it, they shall suffer persecution. We see many every day keep up a profession, but such a profession as will not provoke the world. Now this is to be ashamed of the gospel, to be ashamsd of the power and glory of it, to be ashamed of the author of it. No man can put Jesus Christ to greater shame than by professing the gospel without shewing the power of it. There can be no more vile and sordid hypocrisy, than for any to pretend unto inward habitual sanctification, while their lives are barren in the fruits of righteousness and obedience. *Owen.*

Of all dangers in profession, let professors take heed of this, namely, of a customary, traditional, or doctrinal owning such truths as ought to have their accomplishment in themselves, while they have no experience of the reality and efficacy of them. This is plainly to have a form of godliness, and to deny the power of it. And of this sort of men do we often see may turning atheists, scoffers, and open apostates. Hence it is that the knowledge and profession of the truth with many is so fruitless, inefficacious, and useless. It is not known, it is not understood, nor believed, in its relation unto Christ, on which account alone it conveys either life or power unto the soul. Men profess they know the truth, but they know it not in its proper order, harmony, and use: it leads them not unto Christ, it brings not Christ unto them, and so is lifeless and useless. Hence often none are more estranged from the life of God *than such* who have much notional knowledge of the *doctrines of* the scripture: for they are all of them useless, and subject to be abused, if they are not improved

to form Christ in the soul, and transform the whole person into his likeness and image. This they will not effect, where their relation unto him is not understood; where they are not received and learned as a revelation of him, with the mystery of the wisdom and will of God in him. For whereas he is our life, and in our living unto God we do not so much live as he liveth in us, and the life we lead in the flesh is by the faith of him; so that we have neither principle nor power of spiritual life, but in, by, and from him; whatever knowledge we have of the truth, if it do not effect an union between him and our souls, it will be lifeless in us, and unprofitable to us. It is learning the truth as it is in Jesus, which alone reneweth the image of God in us, Where it is otherwise, where men have notions of evangelical truths, but know not Christ in them, whatever they profess, when they come really to examine themselves, they will find them of no use unto them, but that all things between God and their souls are stated on natural light and common presumptions. *Owen.*

Acts flowing from a living principle within do carry their evidence along with them, giving a pleasing sensation of their truth and reality, as the genuine offspring of the heart, which nothing that is forced or counterfeit can do. *Cole.*

To believe in Christ for redemption, for justification, for sanctification, is but one half of the duty of faith. It respects Christ only as he died and suffered for us, as he made atonement for our sins, peace with God and reconciliation for us, as his righteousness is imputed to us unto justification. Unto these ends he is indeed firstly and principally proposed unto us in the gospel; and with respect unto them we are exhorted to receive him and to believe in him. But this is not all that is required of us. Christ in the gospel is proposed unto us as our pattern and example of holiness. And as it is a cursed imagination that this was the whole end of his life and death, namely, to exemplify and confirm the doctrine of holiness which he preached; so to neglect his

being our example, in considering him by faith unto that end, labouring after conformity to him, is evil and pernicious. Wherefore let us be much in contemplation of what he was, what he did, how in all instances of duties and trials he carried himself, until an image or idea of his perfect holines is implanted in our minds, and we are made like unto him thereby. *Owen.*

Believers are righteous men: and it is their justice to be glad, and triumph in their victory over death. Justice withholds not what is due, when it is in the power of its hand to pay; to repay vengeance to evil-doers, and praise to them that do well. Death and its accomplices, the law, sin, Satan, and hell, are enemies that have tragically used believers, made them to bear God knows what, shamed them, and tempted them to curse the day of their birth, held them subject to bondage through fear all the time they lay under their power. An holy revenge is now owing to sin and Satan; and now that through Christ they are taken out of those cruel hands, they are able to pay it; able to expose them and to put them to open shame; to shew abroad how they themselves have been used by one mightier than they; how the law, as damning, is abolished; sin is condemned, Satan's head is bruised, death is plagued, the grave is destroyed, and hell hath its mouth stopped. *Burgess.*

Make the Sabbath the market-day for thy soul.

Sunday is not a day to feast our bodies, but our souls. *Anon.*

Learn to distinguish between pride in a duty, and a proud duty; between hypocrisy, or formality, in a person, and a hypocrite, or a formalist; between wine in a man, and a man in wine. The best of saints have the stirrings of such corruptions in them, and a mixture of them in their services: these foul birds will light upon an Abraham's sacrifice. God beholds them as the weaknesses of thy sickly state here below; and pities thee, O *believer*, as thou wouldst pity thy lame child. *Gurnall.*

The grand controversy, between corrupt nature and *Almighty God*, is not whether any or all of the human

race shall be saved: but who shall have the glory of salvation ascribed to him? God, or the creature? The pride of man prompts him to say, "the glory of salvation is due to me; for I save myself." But the great Jehovah justly challenges the glory of salvation to himself, and says, "I will have all the glory thereof; for it is by my sovereign and efficacious grace, that men are saved." *Sladen.*

Is it possible for us to imagine, that Christ came into the world at random, that he died at sixes and sevens, and that the efficacy of what he did and suffered depends on a peradventure? No: he died for elect persons; and all shall be saved, for whom he died. Was the business of salvation suspended on the will of man, or of the devil, not a single soul would ever get to heaven. *Madan.*

You may as well think of adding whiteness to snow, or brightness to the sun, as of adding any thing to the merit of Christ's perfect atonement, consummate righteousness, and finished salvation. *Townshend.*

The souls of the elect were saved upon trust, for four thousand years. The Father gave credit to Christ, and glorified his saints, on the footing of a sacrifice not then offered up, and of a righteousness not then wrought. Christ also, in the days of his flesh, went on credit with his Father; every time he said to a sinner, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," previous to his offering himself on the cross. *Ryland.*

Against whom doth Satan multiply his malicious assaults? Against those, in whom God hath multiplied his graces. Satan is too crafty a pirate, to attack an empty vessel: he seeks to rob those vessels only which are richly laden. *Cowper.*

If Satan cannot please a sinner with his naked state of profaneness; he will endeavour to put him off with something like grace, with a pharisaical profession, and a pharisaical round of duties; such as shall neither benefit the sinner, nor do Satan any hurt. Too many are *persuaded to sit down content with this; like children that cry for a knife*, or a dagger; and are as well plea-

ed with a bone knife, or a wooden dagger, as with the best of all. *Gurnall.*

Many have yielded to go a mile with Satan, who never intended to go with him twain: but, when once on the way with him, have been enveigled further and further, until they know not how to leave him. Thus he leads poor creatures down into the depths of sin, by winding stairs, so that they see not the bottom and end of that, to which they are going. *ibid.*

Satan's temptations on Christ, were like the motions of a serpent on a rock (Prov. xxx. 19.) which make no impression, and leave no dent nor trace behind them.—But, on us, they are as the motions of a serpent on sand, or dust: they make a print, and leave a stain, on the imagination at least, if not on the heart. *ibid.*

There were two remarkable periods in Christ's life, his intrat, and his exit: his entrance into his public ministry, upon his baptism; and his departure out of life, by crucifixion. At both seasons, we find the devil most fiercely encountering him.—The more public thy place, O Christian! and the more eminent thy services for God; the more, thou mayest expect, the grand adversary will plot against thee. *ibid.*

When a Christian is about some notable enterprise for God's glory, then will Satan lie, like a serpent in the way, or as an adder in the path, to bite the horse's heels that the rider may fall backward. *ibid.*

If thou wouldst be guarded from Satan, as a troubler, take heed of him as a seducer. The haft of Satan's hatchet (with which he chops at the Christian's comfort) is made of the Christian's wood. First he tempts to sin, and then for it. *ibid.*

When the coat of a saint is cleanest, the devil is most desirous to roll him in the mire. *ibid.*

Beware of yielding to Satan's motions. A saint's flesh heals not so easily as others. *ibid.*

Satan is never likely to do more mischief, than when *he puts on* Samuel's mantle. *ibid.*

There are three kinds of straits, wherein Satan

aims to entrap the believer: nice questions, obscure Scriptures, and dark providences. *ibid.*

Many saints are troubled with blasphemous and atheistical suggestions, so slily conveyed into their bosom, that they begin to fear, such motions could never have risen there, if they were not natives of the heart; whereas, indeed, the cup was of Satan's own putting into the sack.—The Christian thinks, that these are his sin, as well as his burden: but I can tell him of a greater sin, than all Satan's suggestions put together; and that is, when they make the believer doubt whether he is a child of God, because harrassed by Satan. *ibid.*

Satan knows, that an arrow, out of God's quiver, wounds the believer deep: and therefore, when he accuses, he comes sometimes in God's name. He forges a letter; he, as it were, counterfeits God's hand; and then gives the writing to a poor, disconsolate child of God, threatening him with banishment from his father's house, and loss of his inheritance. The Christian, conscious of his unworthiness, weakness, and many miscarriages, takes it all for gospel; sets himself down for an alien and an outcast; and builds to himself a prison of real distress, on false, imaginary ground. *ibid.*

Endeavour to deal with Satan's base suggestions, as you use to serve those vagrants and rogues that come about the country: though you cannot keep them from passing through the town, yet you take care not to let them settle there, but whip them, and send them to their own home. *ibid.*

When you find your sins so represented and aggravated to you, as exceeding either the mercy of God's nature, or the grace of his covenant, or the merit of Christ's blood, or the power of his spirit; *hic se aperit diabolus*, you may be assured that this comes from hell, and not from heaven: you may know where it was minted. It is one of the devil's lies. *ibid.*

So also, as to the willingness of God to save you. If you think, *that the* Lord is indeed good and gracious, *but not for so great* a sinner as you; that he is strong

and powerful, but not to save you; know, most assuredly, that this is one of Satan's false whispers. Answer them with, "Get thee hence, thy speech betrayeth thee." *ibid.*

Satan is very busy with all good men; especially with ministers: he desired to have Peter in his hands: he buffeted the apostle Paul: he levels his arrows at those that are the most fruitful, flourishing, and useful: as the archer that shot at Joseph, that fruitful bough by a well, and grieved him; though his bow abode in strength, the arms of his hands being made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. *Gill.*

The sinner is the devil's miller, always grinding: and the devil is always filling the hopper, that the mill may not stand still. *Anon.*

We are abominably filthy in the eye of God. He entered into covenant with his powerful and gracious spirit, concerning our sanctification: a spirit, who meets us in all our forms of misery, with all possible ways and modes of mercy. *Ryland.*

There is an internal dignity in sanctification, which is attended with a satisfaction, fortitude, and greatness of mind, which the wicked know nothing of. *Anon.*

A sanctified heart is better than a silver tongue. *Dyer.*

The greater our satisfaction is, the more advanced we are in holiness, the more we shall feel our need of free justification. *Hitchin.*

This is sound religion; to bottom all only upon the everlasting mountains of God's love and grace in Christ, and to live continually in the sight of Christ's infinite righteousness and merits. They are sanctifying: without them, the heart is carnal. *Wilcox.*

Labour after sanctification, to thy utmost: but make not a Christ of it, to save thee. Christ's infinite satisfaction, not thy sanctification, must be thy justification before God. *ibid.*

The heart of a true Christian is always the seat of grace, though he may not always be actually able to dis-

en it. A sun-dial is a sun-dial; and the characters re strongly marked upon it; though we cannot see hich way it points, but when the sun shines upon it. *Gwennap.*

God hides himself, and his providence, behind second auses. *Rollin.*

All temptations, all Satan's advantages, and most of ur own complainings, are laid in self-righteousness and elf-excellency. God pursueth these by setting Satan pon thee, as Laban pursued Jacob for his images. hese must be torn from thee, how unwilling soever ou art. These hinder Christ from coming in; and, ntil Christ come in, guilt will not go out. *Wilcox.*

Self is the principle, motive, or end, of every action one by a natural man. *Gifford.*

If I could but be master of that house-idol, myself, y own, mine; my own wit, will, credit, and ease; how lessed were I! Alas, we have more need to be redeemd from ourselves, than from the devil and the world! *Rutherfoord.*

The honey that you suck from your own righteousess, will turn into gall; and the light, which you take om this, to walk by, will darken into black night upon ie soul. *Wilcox.*

Many, who have escaped the rocks of gross sin, have een cast away on the sands of self righteousness. *Dyer.*

God taught our first parents to make coats, to cover heir naked bodies: but it was the devil, that taught heir posterity to weave false coverings of their own, to ide the nakedness of their souls. *Gurnall.*

When thou believest and comest to Christ, thou must ave thy own righteousness behind thee, and bring othing with thee but thy sins. You must leave behind all your holiness, duties, humblings, &c. and bring othing but your wants and miseries: else, Christ is ot fit for thee, nor thou for Christ. *Anon.*

A *disposition to* establish our own righteousness [as *ground, cause,* or condition of our acceptance with

God,] is a weed that naturally grows in every man's heart. *Anon.*

Some people, it is to be feared, follow the gospel, as a shark follows a ship;—for a dinner. *Madan.*

The sense of your own sin, manifested by the law, will excite in you an intense desire to live to God who took pity on your deformity; who loved you, when not one single feature of comeliness was about you; and loves you still, though much depravity is remaining in you. *Venn.*

The greatest and truest nobility is, to be a servant of the great God. He is nobly descended, who is born from above. *Dyer.*

In all the duties which God requires of a believer, the strength of Christ is made perfect in the weakness of him that is to do them. Christ does not call off believers from doing, but takes away the heaviness and task. The service of Christ is a yoke and a burden, to any person who attempts to perform it without Christ, and to carry all by himself: but the yoke and burden are both light and easy, when Christ bears the weight of them. *Crisp.*

Many stop short of heaven, because they are ashamed to go thither in a fool's coat: for believers are always fools, in the world's account. *Gurnall.*

Our senses have their happiness, as well as our souls: and in heaven, after the resurrection, we shall have a glorified eye, as well as glorified minds. Many, out of curiosity, desired to see Christ, in the days of his flesh: and some choice apostles were admitted to see him, at his transfiguration. But, hereafter it shall be the common privilege of all the faithful. They shall then see him, of whom they have heard so much, and of whose goodness they have tasted, and whose laws they have obeyed, and on whose merits they have depended. *Manton.*

If our sins lie heavy at our hearts, God will not lay *them to our* charge. *Case.*

Nothing can hurt us, but sin; and that shall not hurt *us, if we* can repent of it. Dodd.

The word, sacraments, and prayer, do indeed weaken sin: but only death kills it. *ibid.*

Every sin is an imitation of the devil, and creates a kind of hell in the heart. *Hervey.*

No sin can be little; because there is no little God to sin against. *Brookes.*

No sin can be little, because it is committed against the great God of heaven and earth. To commit little sins, the sinner must find out a little God. *Bunyan.*

I cannot commit sin, but I must set my foot on the law of my Maker. I cannot gratify my lusts, but I must go over my bleeding Saviour. Therefore, away, foul tempter: I hate both thee and thy motions. *Gurnall.*

While we are under the law, and have no better help, sin reigns in us: the law cannot bridle it in. But, when we come under grace by Christ, the dominion of sin, which the law cannot restrain, is captivated and subjected by Christ. I will subdue your iniquities, as it is spoken by the prophet Micah. *Crisp.*

If God's people fall at any time into sin, it is not while they are eyeing the perfection of Christ's righteousness, but when they lose sight of it. *Miller.*

When Satan charges sin upon the conscience, then for the soul to charge it upon Christ, this is gospel-like. Christ serves for this very end. *Wilcox.*

Those sins shall never make an hell for us, which have been an hell to us. *Dyer.*

Sin has brought many a believer into suffering; and suffering has kept many a believer from sinning. *ibid.*

Though it is impossible for a true believer, so to sin, as to fall into hell; yet, wilful sin will bring an hell into his heart. *Madan.*

It is not possible that any Antinomian can be a truly converted person: for a man cannot be truly converted, without having been, first, divinely awakened; and no man can be divinely awakened, without feeling the evil and bitterness of sin. *ibid.*

As a thorn, in the hedge, is a fence; but an offence, *in the midst of a* garden; so sin, in the memory, may do

well, to (humble us and) keep us from relapsing; but is a grievance, in the conscience. Hence, Austin, after he had received assurance of his forgiveness, blessed God, that he could now call his sins to mind, without being affrighted at them. *Arrowsmith.*

The old ashes of the sins of my youth, are now fire of sorrow to me. I have seen the devil, as it were, dead and buried, and yet rise again, and be a worse devil than ever he was. *Rutherfoord.*

If you have to do with a stupid, hardened, unawaked sinner, set the terrors of the law before him, without mercy: endeavour by corrosives, to eat down the proud flesh of his heart. But, when you meet with a sinner, whose soul is pierced, humbled, and touched to the quick with a pungent sense of sin, set before him the love and tenderness, the blood and righteousness of the compassionate and almighty Jesus. Nothing but the balm of Gilead, and the lenitives of the gospel, belong to such a person. *Madan.*

Whom did Christ die for? For sinners. For the greatest sinners. For the chiefest of sinners. A dying Christ for a denying Peter! A crucified Christ for a crucified thief! *Weight.*

If a person was to attend the levee of an earthly prince, every court-day; and pay his obeisance, punctually and respectfully; but, at other times, speak and act in opposition to his sovereign: the king would justly deem such a one, an hypocrite and an enemy. Nor will a solemn and stated attendance on the means of grace in the house of God, prove us to be God's children and friends; if we confine our religion to the church-walls, and do not devote our lips and lives to the glory of that Saviour we profess to love. *Hill.*

Sincerity in a man's professing that which is agreeable to the real sentiments of his mind, is certainly a very laudable thing: but it can never take away the guilt of a man's not conforming the sentiments of his mind *to the objective*, revealed truth. *Gill.*

Our fear commonly meets us at that door, by which

e think to run from it. He that will save his life, ıall lose it. As you love your peace, christians, be ain-hearted with God and man: keep the king's high- ay; the plain, honest way of God's commands and hrist's doctrines. *Gurnall.*

Either take Christ into your lives, or cast him out of ur lips. *Dyer.*

As the Holy Ghost is first a sanctifier, and then a mforter; so, on the other hand, Satan is first a tempt- , and then a troubler; when he has seduced, he falls accusing. *Anon.*

It is one thing, to be child-like; another to be child- h. *Jones.*

As, in two strings of an instrument rightly tuned, if ıe string be touched, the other trembles: so, if one liever suffer, the rest suffer with him. *Jenkins.*

I am particularly delighted with such social inter- ews, as serve to enlarge our knowledge, and refine our fections; such as have an apparent tendency to ren- r us more useful in our present stations, and to ripen for future happiness. This is a feast of reason; a ast of truth; and, I must own, has charms for me, in- itely superior to all the impertinent amusements of odish chat, or the mean gratifications of the bottle.

Let the judgment of charity enjoy it's true latitude: it, for my part, I would not, for a thousand worlds, ve a Socinian's account to give at the end of this. *Arrowsmith.*

When nobility stoops to the office of teaching, nothing less dignity, than the heir of a kingdom, must be the holar: How, then, shall we fully conceive the excel- ncy of the soul, which has the spirit of God for it's pointed teacher and continual guide. *Venn.*

Whatever it be, except the soul, that you are careful out, it has still this most degrading circumstance at- nding it: It has the condition only of an annuity for e: each successive year makes a considerable decrease it's value; and, at death, the whole is at an end for- er. *Ibid.*

Sick persons are often sent, by physicians, to their native soil, that they may again breathe the original air they drew when born at first. The spirit of man was first breathed into him by the Father of spirits; and heaven is the believer's native place: nor can sick souls be cured, until God is enjoyed, and heaven in him. *Arrowsmith.*

Our souls were, at first, fashioned after the image of God; and nothing short of him who is styled The brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, can replenish them. Just as when there is a curious impression left upon wax, nothing can adequately fill the dimensions and lineaments of it, but the very seal that stamped it. *ibid.*

God would not rest from his works of creation, until man was framed; nor can man rest from his longing desires of indigence, until God is possessed. *ibid.*

None can render our souls happy, but God who made them; nor can give satisfaction to them, but Christ who gave satisfaction for them. *ibid.*

As soon may a trunk be filled with wisdom, as a soul with wealth; and as soon might bodily substances be nourished with shadows, as rational spirits be fed with bodies. *ibid.*

Other things may cumber the mind; only the knowledge and love of God in Christ can content it. *ibid.*

The motion of immortal souls is, like that of the celestial bodies, purely circular: they rest not, without returning back to the same point from whence they issued; which is the bosom of God himself. *ibid.*

A true Christian, by his godly sorrow, shews himself a conqueror of that sin by which he was overcome; while the hypocrite, by his pride, shews himself a slave to a worse lust, than that he exclaims against. While a christian commits a sin, he hates it; whereas an hypocrite loves it, while he forbears it. *Anon.*

That submission to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, in the disposal of all our concerns in this world, is an excellent fruit of faith, an eminent part of holi-

ness, or duty of obedience, is acknowledged. And he that cannot live in an actual resignation of himself and all his concerns unto the sovereign pleasure of God, can neither glorify him in any thing, nor have one hour's solid peace in his own mind. This the uncertainty of all things here below calls for. None knows how soon it may be his portion to be brought into the utmost extremity of earthly calamities. There is none so old, none so young, none so wise, none so rich, as thence to expect relief from such things. Where then shall we cast anchor in this condition? whither shall we betake ourselves for quiet and repose? It is no where to be obtained but in a resignation of ourselves and all our concerns into the sovereign pleasure of God. And what greater motive can we have hereunto than this? This first act of divine sovereign pleasure concerning us was the chusing us from all eternity unto holiness and happiness. This was done when we were not, when we had no contrivances of our own: and shall we not now put all our temporary concerns into the same hand! Can the same fountain send forth sweet water and bitter? Can the same sovereign pleasure of God be the free only cause of all our blessedness, and can it do that which is really evil unto us? Our souls, our persons, were secure and blessedly provided for, as to grace and glory, in the sovereign will of God. And what a prodigious impiety is it, not to trust all other things in the same hand, to be disposed of freely and absolutely! If we will not forego our interest in mere, absolute, free, sovereign grace for ten thousand worlds, as no believer will; how ready should we be to resign up thereunto that little portion which we have in this world among perishing things! *Owen.*

It is now many years since the apostate angels made a question whether their will or the will of their Creator should be done: and since that time froward man hath always in that same suit compeered to plead with *them against God* in daily repining against his will. *But the Lord, being* both Party and Judge, hath obtain-

ed a decree, and saith, *Isa.* xlvi. 10. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. It is then best for us, in the obedience of faith and in an holy submission, to give that to God which the law of his almighty and just power will have of us. *Rutherfoord.*

What doth the frequent discouragement and uncomfortable walk of the people of God speak forth? Doth it not witness how little they are in earnest with this great truth of the scripture's accomplishment, or their little establishment therein? What meaneth these distrustful fears and perplexed complaints, if their eyes be but opened to know they have such a well as the promise of God at their hand? How is it that the smallest straits are so puzzling and ready to outwit them, that they so usually stumble at the cross? and as things from without do appear, the encouragement made to ebb and flow? Is not here the cause, that they stagger at the promise, while probabilities in some visible way do not go along for its performance? It is truly easy to have some sweet notions of faith at a distance; but when the trial comes near, upon such a close aproach, that there is no other way than to put the whole stress of their particular interest on the word, and on that alone, many are then at a stand, because they are not thoroughly assured, that, though the earth should be overturned, there is an absolute necessity for the promise of God to take place. *Fleming.*

The fulfilling that promise for direction which God hath given his people in the word, That he will guide them with his counsel, will order and direct their steps who do commit their way to him, and teach them the way they shall choose, hath been so manifest to those who have ever made earnest of acknowledging God in their ways, and committing the conduct thereof to him; that I shall but attest their experience, if they have not this testimony to give, that to trust God with their *case, and give* him the guiding of their way, hath taken *them much* more easily through a plunging case than *overcaring* anxiety: yea, the Lord's directing their

teps, and making things successful when they have ommitted the same to him, hath been often as sensile to them as their strait and difficulty was. Their exerience can also witness how overcaring anxiety hath ften caused things to thrive worse under their care; hile they never found a more satisfying issue in a paricular than by a quiet, submissive dependance upon he Lord for the same. *ibid.*

He that looks not for much from the creature can ever be much deceived. He that looks for much rom God shall be sure to have his desire answered nd satisfied; he shall never fall short of his expecation. *Preston.*

Since it is sure and undeniable that the earth doth ang in an empty place, though men see not whereon t leans and rests, O what a strange thing is it! could he air bear up so vast and ponderous a body? But erein is a marvellous divine power convincingly witessed, which hath so established it, that it cannot be oved. Now is it not this very word that bears up uch a weight? And thence with as clear ground we ay reason for adventuring the church, with its weight nd every Christian's burden, whatever it may be, on he promise of this God, on whose word the great bulk of the earth doth this day lean? I must say, no mathematical demonstration does follow by a clearer evidence, than this consequence from such premises is undeniable. *Fleming.*

How few, among the throng of professed protestants, know what it is to have the Bible for the security of the protestant interest, and thus quiet their souls, though all the foundations seem to shake, because they know the cause is certainly God's, and he is faithful who hath promised. *ibid.*

Whatever notional knowledge men may have of divine truths, as they are doctrinally proposed in the scripture, yet, if they know them not in their respect unto the person of Christ, as the foundation of the counsels of God; if they discern not how they proceed from

him and centre in him, they will bring no saving, spiritual light unto their understandings. For all spiritual light and life is in him and from him alone. *Owen.*

The difference between believers and unbelievers, as to knowledge, is not so much in the matter of their knowledge as in the manner of knowing. Unbelievers, some of them, may know more and be able to say more of God, his perfections and will, than many believers; but they know nothing as they ought, nothing in a right manner, nothing spiritually and savingly, nothing with a holy, heavenly light. The excellency of a believer is not that he hath large apprehensions of things, but that what he doth apprehend (which may perhaps be very little) he sees it in the light of the Spirit of God, in a saving, soul-transforming light. And this is that which gives us communion with God, and not prying thoughts, or curious raised notions. *ibid.*

No man can set his affections on things here below who hath any regard to the pattern of Christ, or is in any measure influenced with the power and efficacy of his cross. My love is crucified, said an holy martyr of old. He whom his soul loved was so, and in him his love to all things here below. Do you therefore find your affections ready to be engaged unto or too much entangled with the things of this world; are your desires of increasing them, your hopes of keeping them, your fears of losing them, your love unto them, your delight in them, operative in your minds, possessing your thoughts, and influencing your conversation? Turn aside a little, and by faith contemplate the life and death of the Son of God: a blessed glass will it be, where you may see what contemptible things they are which you perplex yourselves about. O that any of us should love or esteem the things of this world, the power, riches, goods or reputation of it, who have had a spiritual view of them in the cross of Christ! *ibid.*

Outward things did never yield less than when we *press them* most; and when we are eager in the pursuit *of the world*, and satisfaction there, our spirits are bur-

ried with many perturbations: so that we must say, That which keepeth from enjoying God doth also hinder the comfortable enjoyment of ourselves. *Fleming.*

It is a thing to be lamented, that a Christian, born for heaven, having the prize of his high calling set before him, and matters of that weight and excellency to exercise his heart upon, should be taken up with trifles, and fill both his head and heart with vanity and nothing, as all earthly things will prove ere long. Yet, if many men's thoughts and discourses were distilled, they are so frothy, that they would hardly yield one drop of true comfort. *Sibs.*

The more we cast the thoughts and love of the world out of our hearts, the fairer we lie for communications of light and knowledge from heaven, which God has promised to strangers upon the earth; but, if a man will be always muddling in the world, it is just with God to hide his commandments from him. A saint never carries it more like a saint than when he carrieth it most like a stranger in this world. *Cole.*

A man must have the spirit of God, before he can have true faith: for, the spirit does not first find faith in us, and then come himself to us; but he first cometh himself to us, and then worketh faith in us. So that he, that believes, must needs have the spirit: for, unless he had the spirit, he could not believe. *Beveridge.*

Where the spirit of God is, there is the spring of goodness, from whence the streams of goodness must needs flow. So that he, who saieth a man may believe and yet not have the spirit; or that a man may have the spirit in him; and yet good works not be performed by him; (says what) cannot be; for, in that he (the Holy Ghost) is a spirit, he is an active principle, always doing: and, in that he is the spirit of God, he is an holy principle, and therefore must always be doing good. *ib.*

Observe some beautiful and copious river. How it exhilarates the country, and fructifies the soil, through which it *passes.* Bestows a thousand conveniences, and *gives birth to a* thousand delights. So the comforter,

dwelling in the heart, gives such charming views of Christ and his unsearchable riches, as gladden the conscience, and make us truly happy. Hence, as from an inexhaustible source, true holiness flows, and every spiritual good. This will raise our desires far above earthly, sensual, transitory things; even as David's thoughts were raised far above the shepherd's scrip, when he sat exalted on the throne of Israel. *Hervey.*

Was it possible for an unregenerate sinner to die, go to hell for a time, and return to the world again, he would continue, after his return, as great a sinner, and as great a lover of sin, as he was before. And why so? Because affliction, death, and hell itself, cannot work a saving change on the soul of man. Nothing can renew us, till God takes our hearts into his own hand, and converts us by the efficacious grace of his invincible spirit. *Ryland.*

The spirit of God can convert men, without the Bible; but the Bible cannot convert without the spirit. *Shirley.*

Whence must fire descend, to thaw the iciness of the heart, but from heaven? The holy spirit must breathe upon the soul (as the prophet stretched himself upon the dead child,) and then the soul will come to some kindly warmth, and heavenly heat in it's affections. He helps us to those sighs and groans, which fill the sails of prayer. *Anon.*

While the opening of the prison to them that are bound, is proclaimed in the gospel; the spirit of God comes to the prison-door, opens it, goes to the prisoner, and, by the power of his grace, makes his chains fall off. *Boston.*

Let men tear and tire themselves night and day, with a multitude of prayers; yet, if a work of the spirit of God, in teaching the nature and guilt of unbelief, the nature, efficacy, and use of faith in Christ Jesus, go not with it, all will be lost and [come to nothing.] *Owen.*

The spirit will not take a believer, and lead him by *the hand*, and set him into the way (as a friend doth, to *lead one a mile* out of town,) and then leave him alone,

to go the rest of the way by himself; no: but the spirit will be the companion of the soul, to secure it; a conductor to the very harbour and haven itself. *Crisp.*

It is a privilege of this nation, that merchants may have a convoy, a navy royal, it may be, to go out with them; but it will hardly come in with them; therefore here is not absolute security in this convoy. But whoever takes Christ, hath the spirit to go in and out before him and with him: to go forth, to come back, to go all the way with him: for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. *ibid.*

Sometimes, the breathings and desires of the soul are only expressed by sighs and groans. Yet, these are signs of spiritual life. If a man groans, it is plain he is alive.

Abraham might give Ishmael a bottle of milk; but Isaac had the inheritance. *ibid.*

Though you get strokes and frowns from your Lord, yet believe his love more than your own feeling. The world can take nothing from you, that is truly your's: and death itself can do you no hurt. It is not your rock, that ebbs and flows; but your sea. *Rutherfoord.*

In vain ye bow your knees, at the name of Jesus; unless your souls bow [and submit] to his righteousness. *Jenks.*

Oh, how sweet are sufferings for Christ! God forgive them that raise an ill report on the sweet cross of Christ. Our weak and dim eyes look only to the black side of the cross; and this occasions our mistakes concerning it. They that can take it cheerfully on their backs, shall find it just such a burden, as wings to a bird, or sails to a ship. *Rutherfoord.*

Christ is strong, even when lying in the dust, in prison, and in banishment. Losses and disgraces are the wheels of Christ's triumphant chariot. In the sufferings of his saints, he intends his own glory, and their good; this is the two-fold mark, he aims at: and he does not shoot at random; but always touches the point *he purposeth to hit.* ibid.

Sufferings are comfortable, when they overtake us in the way of duty. *Manton.*

There is as much difference between the sufferings of the saints, and those of the ungodly, as there is, between the cords, with which an executioner pinions a condemned malefactor, and the bandages wherewith a tender surgeon binds his patient. The design of the one, is to kill; of the other, to cure. Believers undergo many crosses, but no curses. *Arrowsmith.*

Every son and daughter of God shall be provided for. *Anon.*

Whither should we go for water, but to the spring? Whither should we go for strength, but to the fountain of strength? Is it not a derogation from Christ, that when all fulness is in him alone, we should forsake the fountain of fulness, to go unto broken cisterns that will hold no water? Mark it well: as often as ever you run to any creature, in any necessity of exigence, either before you go to Christ, or instead of going to Christ; so often you rob Christ of that pre-eminence, which God hath given him, and we should pay him. *Crisp.*

A child of God may be cast down, but he cannot be cast off. *Gifford.*

God's people are never in a more thriving state of soul, than when they are carrying the cross. It is the delight of the holy spirit, to pull down the pride of self, and to build up the glory of free grace. The lightest feather of affliction that can be laid on the back of our patience, will break us down, if God's spirit is not by to support us. Christ's righteousness is the only worthiness of a sinner. Go to him, every moment, as a poor sinner, to a rich Saviour. I hope it will be my prayer, when I come to die (and I am sure it will, if I am then in my senses,) God be merciful to me a sinner. *Romaine.*

No sooner is the new creature born, no sooner is a sinner converted, than the old dragon throws out a flood of temptation after him. *ibid.*

Well may God suffer thee to lose thy locks, when *thou* darest wilfully to lay thy head in the lap of temptation. *ibid.*

Christ doth not, presently after he has converted a man, convey him to heaven; but suffers him first to be beaten upon by many temptations, and then exalts him to his crown. *Arrowsmith.*

Temptation is the fire that brings up the scum of the heart. *Boston.*

Put a low value on the world's clay, and put an high value on Christ. Temptations will come; but if you do not make them welcome, they will turn to your advantage. *Rutherfoord.*

If the carnal mind were not enmity against God, and incapable of discerning spiritual things, the scriptures would be universally admired. Laying aside the idea of divine inspiration, they are inimitably beautiful, both in respect of sentiment and composition. There is a vast variety, and every one would find something to gratify his peculiar taste. The mind which loves the historic page would be wonderfully pleased with the history of the old world; and the amazing vicissitudes of the posterity of Jacob. How many miraculous events took place from their going down into Egypt to the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans! The person delighted with the lofty strains of poetry, would find infinite gratification in some ancient songs, composed to celebrate certain signal deliverances; as when Israel sang after their passage through the Red Sea, and Deborah when Sisera fell before her. The book of Job, the prophecies of Isaiah, and the performances of the sweet singer of Israel, would fill his heart with admiration. The book of Ecclesiastes would suit the mind anxious to be acquainted with the works of nature; and the proverbs of Solomon are an unequalled system of morality. Were it not for the vitiated and depraved taste of mankind, the celebrated *Parnassus* would be forsaken for *Zionhill*, and the poisonous streams, once sacred to the muses, would be exchanged for the *wells of salvation*. But *the scriptures are divine;* and the natural man receiveth not the things of *the spirit of God*, for they are foolishness unto him,

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. God hath written to us the great things of his law, but they are counted as a strange thing by the bulk of mankind. *Anon.*

Study the holy scriptures, especially the New Testament; therein are contained the words of eternal life—it has God for its author—salvation for its end; and truth without mixture for its matter. *Lock.*

To read of events without observing the hand of God in them, is to read as Atheists; to read, and not to observe how all events conduce to carry on the work of redemption, is to read as Deists. *Brown.*

No book is equal to the Bible; no writings are worthy of being put in competition with those of the holy scriptures. No system could ever vie with the christian for the sublimity of its doctrines, the consistence of its parts, the depth of its mysteries, and the purity of its morals. The word of God will recommend itself, on a fair trial, to every wise man. Read it, christian, with attention and prayer. Read it, ye infidels, with candour and consideration. Ye will soon perceive its superior excellence, and may taste of its exquisite sweetness. The Topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal the wisdom that is from above. The gold of Ophir cannot be valued with it; nor will we exchange it for jewels of fine gold. The price of this wisdom is above rubies; the taste of it is sweeter than honey, and the honey comb. *Anon.*

The spirit, in his work of sealing believers, attests and witnesseth, both first to the doctrine, or objects of faith; and, secondly, to the infused habit of the grace of faith in the soul. Of the former, he sayeth, this is my word, I indited it; do you therefore believe and embrace it. Of this latter, he sayeth, this is my work within you; this grace, this faith, this love, patience, self-denial, is my work within you: I have produced all these things in your soul:—so that this sealing work *of the spirit,* is always agreeable to the written word of *God, Isaiah viii.* 20. What he speaks in his holy word, *d in our hearts,* are all harmonious testimonies.

The spirit, in sealing believers, makes not use of an audible voice, so as to say, Thomas, or John, thy sins are pardoned, &c. nor of immediate or extraordinary revelations; therefore expect them not; for he makes use of the spiritual graces that are wrought in the soul, and of the precious promises written in the word. By these means the holy spirit comforts the heart, and usually brings the soul to rest and joy. *ibid.*

Gospel hearers, in the beginning and progress of their profession, should frequently inspect their hearts, and maintain a holy jealousy, least they be mistaken. Without watching and keeping the heart, we must be strangers at home. To point out the great advantages of a holy jealousy, the scriptures assert, that blessed is the man who feareth always. Jealousy leads the Christian to fix the *one* eye upon God, and the *other* on his own heart and conduct. Thus "he stands in awe, and sins not, but communes with his heart," and fears, lest a promise being left of entering into God's rest, he should *seem* to come short of it: like a trusty and vigilant guard, jealousy watches at once over the old and new man:—over the new, to see if he exists in the heart, and prospers:—over the old, with his allies, to oppose their deceit and violence. If, at any time, the Christian sleeps, he finds, in his sad experience, that the watchful adversary has improved the opportunity, and sowed tares. *ibid.*

The Lord's work on the human heart is a great mystery. Scarcely at any period do the Lord's people understand fully what they feel; and they never can express it. Under convictions, often they cannot make language of their anguish of heart, and sometimes can give little account how it began at their first awakening, they are ignorant of the great agent who brought them into such a condition, and of his gracious design.—While every thing conspires to advance their best interest, they conclude that all is against them. The language of the weary often is that their hope is cut off, and they must perish. At the first implantation of

grace, they scarcely know its nature, or how it is produced. When greatly dejected, and their sorrow at its height, it is most mysterious how a sentence or two from the Bible should irradiate their minds, and solace their hearts. The continued communion which they have with the Lord Jesus, by means of his word, is also a great mystery. Most emphatic are the words of the Redeemer: "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is EVERY ONE that is born of the spirit." *ibid.*

Christ speaks to the heart. His chief concern is with the heart. When stout, he breaks it: when broken, he heals it: When healed, he comforts it: and when partly comforted, he promises and will certainly bestow full consolation. *ibid.*

Of all sinners, none are more cherished by Satan, or better fitted for promoting his interest, than the hypocrite. When the Jews could not prevail against Christ, a false disciple betrayed him. What befel the head, has often happened to his cause and members; a Judas has betrayed them. While Satan hates the power of godliness, he has no objection to the form. Persons professing a form, but denying the power, are eminently calculated to injure Christ's interest, and promote Satan's. They have better access to know how matters stand in Israel, and Satan employs them as spies. Sometimes he makes the hypocrite a clog on the Lord's people, to retard them; at other times a pest, to disturb and sow discord among them. Sometimes he makes him a great discouragement; at other times a great temptation to the true Christian. The truth of these things are evident from many passages in the scriptures. The tares are ready to choke the wheat. Evil communications corrupt good manners. The foolish virgins intice the wise to sleep. Hypocrites open a large field *for Satan to* act in the church. *ibid.*

A great sinner may be a great professor. Judas *made the* same profession with the eleven. A high pro-

fession of love to Christ, and superlative love to sin often dwell together. The Pharisees made high professions of religion, and were inexpressibly wicked. With peculiar emphasis did Christ give them the designation of a whited sepulchre. The monument, or grave stone beautifully ornamented, pleases the beholder, while it covers the most nauseous putrefaction. Often the gifts and appearance of the hypocrite may please others; but could the rottenness of his heart be seen, it would be offensive and loathsome, as the putrid carcass. *ibid.*

Great grace may consist with great fear. The disciples were very gracious persons; but such an alarming and home charge, as that one of them should betray their master, made them tremble, and filled their hearts with fear, least they should prove the traitors. In the history of the saints, a fear of being mistaken, falling away, or giving offence, will be found strongly characteristic of genuine grace. Fear is so descriptive of the real character of the true christian, that he is often denominated by it, and called a fearer of the Lord. A filial and holy fear keeps the christian depending on Christ for strength, and leads him to watchfulness against his enemies, and over his own heart. Grace makes progress in proportion to this fear. *ibid.*

God accepteth mites, though his due be ten thousand talents: else what would become of the richest in faith and works? *ibid.*

Trees do grow downwards when they have scarce sap enough to show that they are alive upward. Wondrously gainful are many spiritual losses: good words and works are a christian's leaves and fruits. Self denial, and faith in Christ, are his root. By the winter season, which doth deaden him to those former, he is enlivened and strengthened in these latter: and the temptations and temporary desertions, which take from his activity, do make him amends by notable additions unto his humility, *even all the* days of his life. *ibid.*

Happier, a great deal, is he, whose soul, by inward

desolation, is humbled, than he, whose heart, through abundance of spiritual delight, is lifted up above measure. Remember, troubled soul, remember well, bitterly humbling winters do make sweet and fruitful summers. *ibid.*

If the corn upon the ground be good, it matters not how little deep the plough went. Do not torment thyself, as some do, with fears that thou art not of the good ground, upon a surmise that God hath not broken thee up with convictions and humiliations sufficiently deep. Examine more thy corn, and be less concerned about the plough. If thy reliance on Christ's righteousness be entire, and thy imitations of his holiness be constant and cordial, the plough hath done its part upon thee. *ibid.*

Consider on the other hand, that there are valuable things kept in brine as well as in sugar. Dream not that because thy life is made sorrowful, God intends not ever to advance thee to his fulness of joy. The fruits which are preserved in sweetness that exceedeth honey, are not more intended for the table of the Lord than the meats that are buried in salt and bitterness. *ibid.*

All the fruits of Christ's garden are not of the same size, nor equally soon ripe. Conclude not that thou art none of his plants, because others do vastly excel thee in all christian virtues, and outdo thee in all the works of righteousness. One rose upon a bush, though but a little one, and though not yet blown, proveth that which beareth it to be a true rose tree. Look well to thy sincerity and to thy sincere labour for proficiency; then know that neither God nor men do cut down good trees, because small, or despise unripe flowers and fruits if they be ripening. *ibid.*

A *sorry speaker* may be a most excellent *wrestler*. *Milo* had not the tongue of *Cicero*. *Moses*, that great *prevailer* with God, was a man of a very slow *utterance*. *Do not say*, you cannot pray, because you cannot speak *much*, *or well*, or long. Praying, is wrestling with

: the heart is the wrestler: holy faith is the strength
If by means of this strength thy heart be a good
ler, though thou art ever so tongue-tied, thou wilt
revailer. Rhetoric goes for little in the heavenly
: but sincere groans have a kind of omnipotence.
ibid.

ints are not always so meek as they ought: "God
smite thee, thou whited wall," said the apostle to
igh priest. But, as they draw nearer to heaven,
tempers are generally more heavenly: "Lord, lay
his sin to their charge," said dying Stephen.
Wilkes.

ead, and all other outward mercies, a man may
ve from an angry God: whereas, pardon of sin
r cometh but from favour and special love.
Arrowsmith.

: is a bad christian, who cuts the coat of his profes-
according to the fashion of the times, or the hu-
: of the company he falls into. *Gurnall.*

any persons have been overwhelmed with hurtful
rs, and led to pass sentence on themselves, as
gh they were concluded in unbelief, and without
st in the world; at the very time they were seeking
elp and grace, and consequently, in the scripture
: of the word, were true and sincere believers.
Anon.

ie thought of Jesus Christ, reaching the heart, is
to be valued, than all creature-contentments what-
:r, though they should be enjoyed in their fulness
thousand years, without interruption. *Ball.*

how little is your hand-breadth and span-length
ys here! your inch of time is less than when you
I parted. Eternity is coming, posting on with
s: then shall every man's blacks and whites be
ght to light. *Rutherfoord.*

om justification, arises our title to heaven; from
ification, arises our meetness for it. A king's son
ir apparent to his father's crown. We will sup-
he young prince to be educated with all the ad-

vantages, and to be possessor of all the attainments, that are necessary to constitute a complete monarch. His accomplishments, however great, do not entitle him to the kingdom; they only qualify him for it: so the holiness and obedience of the saints are no part of that right, on which their claim to glory is founded, or for which it is given; but a part of that spiritual education, whereby they are fitted and made meet to inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world. *Madan.*

None are transplanted into the paradise above, but from the nursery of grace below.

God blotteth out transgressions, aggravated and innumerable, as easily, and as completely, as the wind sweeps away a floating cloud from the face of the sky. *Hervey.*

Suppose, christian, the furnace be seven times hotter; it is but to make you seven times better.—Fiery trials make golden christians. *Dyer.*

I never had, in all my life, so great an inlet into the word of God, as now [viz. as during his twelve years imprisonment]: insomuch that I have often said, "Were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comfort's sake." *Bunyan.*

When Abraham's knife was at Isaac's throat, God provided a ram, for a burnt offering. And, in all trouble, the Lord will either provide deliverance for his people, or provide strength for them to bear it. *Gifford.*

We may be losers for God, but we shall never be losers by him. *Crip. Lect.*

I never trusted God, but I found him faithful; nor my own heart, but I found it false. *Dyer.*

Truth is the bond of union among saints. *Fernice.*

Sometimes, by the force of truth, the outer door of the understanding is broken up; while the inner door of the will remains fast bolted. *Boston.*

Truth does not depend on the power, wisdom, or *faithfulness* of men: but remains constantly the same, *though Peter* deny and Judas betray. Hitchin.

Unbelief gives a dash to the glory of Christ, but not to our salvation. *Rutherfoord.*

Whilst thou art unconverted, thy body is but the living coffin of a dead soul. *Anon.*

"I propose, to the universalists, this dilemma.

The Father proposed his wrath, due unto, and Christ underwent punishment for, either

All the sins for all men;

Or, all the sins of some men;

Or, some sins of all men.

If the last, then all men have some sins to answer for: and so no man shall be saved.

If the second (which is the proposition we lay down as truth,) then Christ, in their stead, suffered for all the sins of all the elect in the whole world. If the first, why are not all freed from the punishment due unto their sins?" You answer, "Because of their unbelief."—— I ask, is this unbelief a sin, or not? If not, why should they be punished for it? If it be, then Christ suffered the punishment due unto it, or he did not. If he did, why must that hinder them, more than their other sins for which he died? If he did not, then he did not die for all their sins.

Let them [i. e. the Arminians] take which part they please. *Sheppard.*

He that fears he has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, may be certain that he has not committed it. *Dodd.*

Our hearts, by nature, are like the load-stone which refuseth gold and pearls, and only attracts rust and iron. Unregenerate people fly from God as if they were afraid of salvation. *Cripplegate Lectures.*

What wise man would bring fishes, out of the water, to feed in his meadows? or send his oxen to feed in the sea? As little are the unregenerate meet for heaven, or heaven meet for them. *Boston.*

An unregenerate man is equally dead to God, whether *he be buried in* a sink of vice, or under a fair monument *of natural* virtue. Dohnau.

An unrenewed person, while you please him, resembles the sea-coast at high water: all the filth, that lies beneath, is concealed by the incumbent tide. But when that same person is tempted, or provoked, he is like the beach at low water: and the rubbish, and stones, and dead dogs and cats, become visible presently. *Lunell.*

Many are soon engaged in holy duties, and easily persuaded to take up a profession of religion; and as easily persuaded to lay it down: like the new moon, which shines a little, in the first part of the night; but is down before half the night is over. *Gurnall.*

Seek for an established judgment in the doctrinal truths of God. Some persons are so unsettled, that every wind blows them down, like loose tiles from the house-top. Blind zeal is soon put to a shameful retreat, while holy resolution, built on fast principles, lifts up its head, like a rock in the midst of the waves. *ibid.*

Christ's children must not always expect to lean upon his bosom. He sometimes sets them down on the cold, frosty side of the hill, and makes them walk, barefooted, upon thorns. Yet does he keep his eye of love upon them, all the while.—Our pride must have winter-weather, to rot it. *Rutherfoord.*

Other sinners serve the devil for pay; but cursers and swearers are volunteers [who get nothing for their pains.] *Boston.*

Wait for Christ's appearing. He shall come, as certainly as the morning; as refreshing as the rain. *Wilcox.*

Wait patiently on God; it is becoming of a dutiful child, when he hath not presently what he writes for to his father to say, "My father is wiser than I; his own wisdom will tell him, what and when to send to me." Oh, Christian! thy heavenly Father hath gracious reasons, which hold his hands for the present; or else thou hadst heard from him ere now. *Gurnall.*

A believer's watchfulness is somewhat like that of a soldier on guard. A centinel, posted on the walls, when he discovers a hostile party advancing, does not attempt to make head against them himself; but im-

forms his commanding officer of the enemy's approach, and leaves him to take the proper measures to repel the foe. So the christian does not attempt to fight temptation in his own strength: his watchfulness lies in observing its approach, and in telling God of it, by prayer. *Tozer.*

He that would walk aright, must have one eye upward to Jesus Christ; and another inward, to the corruption of his own nature. *Boston.*

It is an advantage, not a discouragement, to be weak in ourselves. When a bucket is empty, it can be the better filled out of the ocean. *Manton.*

It may be, thou art a poor, trembling soul: thy faith is weak, and thy assaults from Satan strong; thy corruptions great, and thy strength little; so that in thy opinion, they rather gain ground on thy grace, than give ground to it: yea, every now and then, thou art apt to dread, that thou shalt, one day, be cast as a wreck on the Devil's shore. And yet, to this day, thy grace lives. [Thou art still longing, panting, desiring, wishing, and groaning for God.] It is not worth while to turn and see this strange sight? A broken ship, with masts and hull rent and torn, full of leaks, yet towed along by almighty power, through a tempestuous sea (nor tempestuous only, but thick set with armadas of sins, afflictions, doubts, and temptations), safely into God's harbour! To see a poor rush-candle, in the face of the boisterous winds, and liable to the frequent dashes of quenching waves, yet not blown out! In a word, to see a weak stripling in grace held up in God's arms, until all enemies are under his feet! This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. *Gurnall.*

It is from the devil, that weak christians make a rack to themselves of the attainments of the strong: and to yield to this temptation, is as unreasonable, as for a child to dispute away his relation to his father, because he is not of the same stature with his elder brethren. Boston.

A soul may truly go to Christ, though with a tremb-

ling heart; and may truly receive Christ, though with a trembling hand. *Pike.*

God may sometimes communicate less of his assisting strength, that he may shew the more of his supporting strength, in upholding weak grace. *Gurnall.*

Wealth is an accessary good, but no necessary blessing. A christian may be completely happy without it. *ibid.*

Wealth and worldly possessions are often an hurt and sore pull-back to christian professors: like some soldiers, who, when they once meet with a rich booty at the sacking of some town, are spoiled for fighting ever after. *Gurnall.*

Christ suffers his loving and beloved people to weep; because there is nothing better in this life, than an heart afflicted for the sake of Christ: nor does any thing prepare us more for the visitations and graces of our blessed Saviour, than those tears which flow from our grief at the heavenly bridegroom's absence, and from our ardent desire to possess him. *Quesnet.*

The wicked dwell more on the faults of God's children, than on their graces: as the flies settle on a sore place; and as vultures fly over the gardens of delight, to pitch on a carrion. *Manton.*

We should not be with wicked men as their companions, but physicians. *Anon.*

Take God into thy counsel. Heaven overlooks hell. *Gurnall.*

Among men, a little science will make a great shew: but he only is wise, in God's esteem, who is wise unto salvation. *Arrowsmith.*

Seeing the saints must have a devil, to keep them waking; I wish for a troublesome devil, rather than for a secure and sleepy one. *Rutherfoord.*

What grosser contradiction can you conceive, than to confess yourself guilty, and to implore pardon, while, *at the same* time you cherish an hope of being favourably regarded on your own account? For, to implore pardon, implies, that you lie at the feet of mercy, with-

out any plea, but what is entirely drawn from God himself: whereas, to trust in your own obedience, or virtue, as a coadjutor with Christ, certainly implies a very high degree of worth in what proceeds from yourself. *Venn.*

According to this scheme [viz. of acceptance with God on the footing of works in part], you make the glorious Redeemer undertake our ransom only to render our deficient duties meritorious, and our sins inoffensive. You make his sinless life, his meritorious death, and his mediatorial undertakings, serve no other purpose, than that of a mere pedestal, on which human worth may stand exalted, and appear what it is not. According to this scheme, the pardon of rebels against the Most High, and the reception of leprous sinners into the bosom of heaven, are owing to the works of our own hands, and to the virtues of our own character, in conjunction with Christ. Now, what greater affront can be offered to that divine goodness, which interposed to save us when we were lost, than this to divide the cause of our [justification and salvation] between Christ and ourselves. *ibid.*

We are apt to suppose, that God is such an one as ourselves. If we wish to enjoy the patronage of a great man, we, very naturally, think, we must say or do something that may acquire his esteem, and recommend us to his notice. Thus would we also treat with God: when, alas! the plain truth is, we can have, and say, and do nothing that he approves, until he himself gives it of his free grace, and works it in us by his spirit. *Gallatin.*

I could not help being affected with that noble passage in a christian writer; "If all the enjoyments in the world were to be sold together in one lot, they would not be worth even the labour of a man's opening his mouth to say, I will not buy them." *Arrowsmith.*

Time was, when Satan shewed our Saviour all the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them. Oh, *christian! if ever* the world appear to thee temptingly *glorious, suspect* it for one of Satan's discoveries. *ibid.*

As for those saints, whose wings are still somewhat clogged with the bird-lime of the world; let them consider, how ill it becomes the offspring of heaven to go licking up the dust of this earth; the woman's seed, to content itself with the food of the serpent. *ibid.*

The creatures, like deceitful streams, frustrate the thirsty traveller's expectation. They delude us, (like the monument of Semiramis) with many a promising motto, as if they would give us peace and ease of heart: but, when we come to look within, instead of contentment, they afford us nothing but conviction of our folly in expecting satisfaction from them, or from any thing short of God. *ibid.*

As Jonah's gourd withered in the morning, when he hoped for most benefit by it against the ensuing heat of the day; so the blessings of this world frequently wither, when we expect to find most freshness in them, and to receive most refreshment from them. *ibid.*

We must not expect more from any thing than God hath put into it. He never intended to put the virtue of soul-satisfying into any mere creature: but hath reserved to himself, Son, and Spirit, the power of satisfying the souls of men, of contenting and making them happy, as a principal branch of his own divine prerogative. To such as expect it elsewhere, that person or thing they rely upon, may say to them, as Jacob to Rachel, Am I in God's stead. *ibid.*

When the worldly-wise have divided into the bottom of nature's sea, instead of coming up laden with pearls of price, they return with nothing but handsful of shells and gravel. *ibid.*

As when an army of men come to drink at some mighty river, there is no want, but all go satisfied away; whereas, had they come to a paltry brook, they would not have found water enough to quench the thirst of each; so, created things are narrow brooks, or, rather, broken cisterns; from which immortal souls cannot but *return empty*, dissatisfied, and disappointed. But Christ *hath a river of* love and joy and peace, whereof he gives

his followers to drink; and, drinking whereof, they are easy, safe, and happy. *ibid.*

See the vanity of the world, and the consumption that is upon all things; and love nothing but Christ. *Wilcox.*

The world will be burnt up, in the day of Christ's appearance. And why should night-dreams, and day-shadows, and water-froth, and May-flowers, run away with your heart in the mean while? When we come to the water side, and set our foot in the boat, and enter on the river of death, we shall wonder at our past folly. *Rutherfoord.*

Earth, earth is what worldly men never think they have enough of, until death comes and stops their mouth, with a shovelful of earth digged out of their own grave. *Gurnall.*

Glowings of affection are usually wrought in young converts, who are, ordinarily, made to sing in the day of their youth, *Hos.* ii. 14. While the fire-edge is upon the young convert, he looks upon others, reputed to be godly; and not finding, in them, such a [lively] temper and disposition, as in himself, he is ready to censure them and to think that there is far less religion in the world than indeed there is. But, when his own cup comes to settle below the brim, and he finds that in himself, which made him question the state of others, he is more humbled, and feels, more and more, the necessity of daily recourse to the blood of Christ for pardon, and to the spirit of Christ for sanctification: and thus grows downwards in humiliation, self-loathing, and self-denial. *Boston.*

Young zeal, and old knowledge, make that christian both happy and useful, in whom they meet. *Russel.*

As Abraham dealt by his concubine's children, so doth God by the Ishmaels of the world; he gives them portions and sends them away; but the inheritance he reserves for his Isaacs: to them he gives all that he hath, yea, even himself: and what can we have more? *Cole.*

Hereby many deceive their own souls; goods, lands,

possessions, relations, trades, with secular interes
them, are the things whose image is drawn on t
minds, and whose characters are written on their f
heads as the titles whereby they may be known.
believers, beholding the glory of Christ in the ble
image of the gospel, are changed into the same in
and likeness by the Spirit of the Lord; so these
sons, beholding the beauty of the world and the th
that are in it in the cursed glass of selfe-love, ar
their minds changed into the same image. Hence
plexing fears, vain hopes, empty embraces of th
perishing, fruitless desires, earthly, carnal desi
cursed self-pleasing imaginations, feeding on and
ing fed by the love of the world and self, do abide
prevail in them. But we have not so learned Christ
O

Unless we can arrive unto a fixed judgment tha
things here below are transitory and perishing, re
ing only to the outward man, the body; that the
of them have nothing that is truly substantial or a
ing in them; that there are other things, wherein
have an assured interest, that are incomparably be
than they and above them; it is impossible but
must spend our lives in fears, sorrows, and dist
tion.

Let a man but deal plainly with his own heart,
he shall find that, notwithstanding he hath many thi
yet there is ever one thing wanting; for indeed m
soul cannot be satisfied with any creature, no, nor
a world of creatures. And the reason is, because
desires of man's soul are infinite, according to tha
finite goodness it once lost in losing God; yea, m
soul is a spirit, and therefore cannot communicate
any corporal thing; so that all creatures not being
infinite fulness which our souls have lost, and tow
which they do still re-aspire, they cannot give it
contentment. *Mod. Di*

All that God hath, both himself and the creatu
he is dealing and parting among the sons of A

There are none so poor, as that they can say in his face, He hath given them nothing: but there is no small odds betwixt the gifts given to lawful bairns and to bastards. *Rutherfoord.*

Fie, fie upon this condemned and foolish world, that will give so little for Christ and salvation. O if there were but a free market proclaimed of Christ and salvation in that day when the trumpet of God shall awaken the dead, how many buyers would be there! God send me no more happiness but that which the blind world (to their eternal woe) letteth slip through their fingers! *ibid.*

Faith makes the believer inherit substance, and look to things that are real; while the rest of the unbelieving world weary themselves in chasing shadows, and feed their deluded eyes with the sight of vain imaginations. The more the believer looks at things that are not seen, the more reality doth he observe and find in them: whereas the more he looks at things that are seen, the more vanity and emptiness he finds in them. He looks to things seen, and they mock him; he looks upon them, and they are not; a serious look at them looks them into nothing: but things not seen have in them substance, reality, and solidity, which he with delight beholds. He looks upon things seen, and sees them refuse, loss, and dung: but he sees things that are not seen to be so excellent, that even those things which seem to have some glory have yet no glory, by reason of this glory which doth excel. He looks at things that are seen, and sees them like a vapour or airy meteor, in a continual motion while they are, and in a little time they quite vanish: but things not seen, he perceives fixed, unchangable, and that for ever.

Faith has a back look, as well as a fore look; it not only sees those things that are to come in God's revelation of them, but it also in like manner sees those things which have been of old, from everlasting. And indeed a *humbled* believer could not believe the reality *of any favour* tendered unto a vile sinner (such as

he knows himself to be) by the holy God, unless he saw it flowing from sovereign grace as the fountain; he could not believe any thing useful unto himself in his present condition, if it were not the product of wonderful free love that observes not the desert but the need of those upon whom it bestows its favours. Again, he could not be persuaded to believe that he shall have any unchangeable mercy, while he himself changes so often, and very often to the worse, unless he saw them the product of the free, sovereign and eternal love of him who is God, and changes not: and this indeed is the true reason why the sons of Jacob are not consumed. Here is one sweet glass, wherein the believer has indeed a satisfying discovery of the solidity, excellency, and eternal unchangeableness of those things that are not seen. Faith looks at things unseen in their procuring cause, the death of the eternal Son of God, who neither by the blood of goats or calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. Here the believer, which hath faith's eyes, sees the reality of things; for surely the blood of God was not shed for nothing: nay, here it sees their glory and excellency. A wise merchant will not give pearls for trifles; far less the only wise God this precious blood for things of no or small value. Here, if any where, the believer may see them, beyond all rational contradiction, real, great, durable, and eternal. Faith sees and is satisfied about things not seen, by the view it gets of them, their reality, and their glory, in that well-ordered covenant which is the means of their conveyance. *Halyburton.*

Every man blameth the devil for his sins; but the great devil, the house-devil of every man, that eateth and lieth in every man's bosom, that idol that killeth all, is himself. O blessed are they that can deny themselves, and put Christ in the room of themselves! O would to the Lord I had not a myself, but Christ; not a *my lust, but* Christ; not a my ease, but Christ; not a *my honour,* but Christ! O sweet word! I live no more,

but Christ liveth in me! O if every one would put away himself, his own self, his own ease, his own pleasure, his own credit, and his own twenty things, his own hundred things, that he setteth up as idols above Christ!
Rutherfoord.

Seeing men cannot get the doctrine of God's justice blotted out of the Bible, yet it is such an eye-sore to them that they strive to blot it out of their minds; and they ruin themselves by presuming on his mercy, while they are not careful to get a righteousness wherein they may stand before his justice; but say in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.
Boston.

No man, without the light of saving faith, can constantly and universally approve of the revelation of the will of God, as unto our holiness and obedience. *Owen.*

When men live to themselves, and are satisfied that they do no hurt, though they do no good, are secure, selfish, wrathful, angry, peevish, or have their kindness confined to their relations, or otherwise are but little useful but in what they are prest unto, and therein come off with difficulty in their own minds; who esteem all lost that is done for others, and the greatest part of wisdom to be cautious, and disbelieve the necessities of men; that make self and its concerns the end of their lives; whatever otherwise their profession may be, or their diligence in religious duties, they do very little either represent or glorify God in the world. *Owen.*

Mercy in God is drawn out by his will; he pardoneth whom he will: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. The compassion itself doth not work necessarily in God, but it depends on an act of his will. If God had been merciful to no sinner, but had damned all men and angels that had sinned, yet he had been as merciful in his nature as now he is. So that our salvation must be resolved into some other principle than simply his being merciful. For had he not set his *heart to love, had* not his will been set upon it, not a *man that sinned* had ever had a drop of mercy from

him, though he is thus full and rich in mercy. So that, though God is rich in mercy, yet there must be love as the foundation. That which moved him to be merciful to any, it was his love pitched upon them, and then, seeing them in misery, love stirs up mercy. His love had first singled out certain persons whom he meant to shew mercy to, and love did guide the channel which way mercy should run. And therefore you shall find in scripture that election obtained it. Jacob have I loved. And that is the reason why he shews mercy to any, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. Then let the love of God be the greatest thing in your hearts, the nearest thing to your souls of all else. Of all things in God, value his love, and seek after that. God's love is the greatest thing of all: it is more than all his benefits. The love of God is more than all his gifts; and yet he hath given great things to us, and done great things for us. His love is the first gift, in the gift of which all things else are yours. The gift of his Son, it was a great gift to us; but it was founded in his love: He so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, *John* iii. 16. Though we, being sinners, need mercy; that is the next thing we want; O mercy! mercy! because we apprehend ourselves to be in misery: but do you look beyond mercy; look to love, which is a greater thing to you than mercy. The reason why mercy ran into your hearts, and washed you with the blood of Christ, is because love guided the channel. To seek after mercy, this self-love and the misery thou art in will make thee do. O but there is something else, saith a good soul; it is the love of God and the favour of God that I would see; and it is not self-love will ever carry a man on to seek after that. And what is the reason that this chiefly is the pursuit of a soul spiritualized? One, among others, is this, because grace is always the image of *God's heart.* Now this being the chief thing in God's *heart, and* the first and the highest thing, hence *therefore the soul* seeks that ultimately and chiefly.

Goodwin.

These are the tremendous mysteries of our religion, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. From hence the divinity of Christianity openly appears. What wisdom of men or angels could have been able to conceive of such hidden, such sublime thoughts, and at so great a distance from the understanding of all creatures! What adorable wisdom of God, what righteousness, holiness, truth, goodness, and love of mankind, doth here open itself, in finding out, in giving, in perfecting, this means of our salvation! How pleasingly doth conscience, pressed with the burden of its sins, acquiesce in such a surety, in such an engagement! Here at length observing a manner of our reconciliation worthy of God and secure to man! Who, contemplating these things in the light of the Holy Spirit, would not burst forth into the praise of that most holy, most just, most true, best and greatest Deity! O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! O mysteries which the angels desire to look into! Glory to the Father, who hath raised up, admitted, and given to us such a surety! Glory to the Son, who, clothing himself with our flesh, hath so willingly, so patiently, so constantly, gone through such an engagement for us! Glory to the Holy Spirit, the revealer, witness, and pledge of so great happiness to us! All hail! O Christ Jesus, thou true and eternal God, true and holy man, both at once; the properties of both natures preserved in the unity of thy person! thee we acknowledge, thee we worship, to thee we betake ourselves, at thy feet we throw ourselves, from thy hand alone we expect salvation: thou the only Saviour, we would be thy peculiar ones, and are so by thy grace, and for ever shall remain so. Let the whole world of thine elect know thee, acknowledge thee, and with us adore thee, and be saved by thee! This is *the sum of* our faith, our hope, and our prayer. *Amen.* Witsius.

Wouldst thou know the love of God? measure it not by any outward thing, by wealth, honour, or outward prosperity; for this is common with infidels and reprobates, whom the Lord abhorreth. No, there is no outward created comfort can secure us of God's favour; only the having Christ, and receiving him by faith as a gift from the Father: this only is that which is the special pledge of God's favour and love. What is all that the wicked have, the dew of heaven, gladness of heart, sunshine, &c? If they have not the righteousness of Christ to cover them, the life of Christ to quicken them, such things as eye never saw, their condition is woful.

Bain.

Darkness in the minds of men, ignorance of God, his nature, and his will, was the original of all evil unto the world, and yet continues so to be. For hereon did Satan erect his kingdom and throne, obtaining in his design, until he bare himself as the God of this world, and was so esteemed by the most. He exalted himself by virtue of this darkness (as he is the prince of darkness) into the place and room of God, as the object of the religious worship of men. For the things which the gentiles sacrificed they sacrificed unto devils, and not unto God. This is the territory of Satan, yea, the power and sceptre of his kingdom in the minds of the children of disobedience. Hereby he maintains his dominion to this day in many and great nations, and with individual persons innumerable. This is the spring of all wickedness and confusion among men themselves. Hence arose that flood of abominations in the old world, which God took away with a flood of desolation. Hence were the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, which he revenged with fire from heaven. In brief, all the rage, blood, confusion, desolations, cruelties, oppressions, and villanies, which the world hath been and is filled withal, whereby the souls of men have been and are flooded into eternal destruction, have all arisen from this corrupt fountain of the ignorance of God. *Owen.*

There is a great difference between the gift and grace

of prayer. The gift consists chiefly in ability and aptness of expressions, with some show of affection. It is a common gift. That is, reprobates and carnal persons may have it; and that in a greater measure sometimes, than many gracious souls, whereupon a weak believer may misjudge himself, and be discouraged, when he hears with how much fluency and aptness of expression, and with what seeming vehemency of affection others can perform the duty of prayer; and how low, flat, dull, and defective he himself is.

The gift being but the outside, or carcass of duty, it is not much impaired by the course of sin; especially, if the sin be close and secret; the gift of prayer, and practice of sin, can well enough consist together: yea, such have been known, who could pray like angels, and yet practised like devils; who could make free, and full confession of sin, and yet as freely commit it.

The spirit of prayer, is the inside of the duty; it lives within, and mainly consists, in the vigorous motions of the soul, in sanctified affections, holy reachings of soul after God, in vehement strugglings, and contendings of the inward man—My soul followeth hard after thee; and chiefly in the exercise of praying graces; such as faith, love, godly sorrow, &c. whence it appears, that it may be exercised, when there is not a word uttered. The gift of prayer, lies much on the tongue's end, and may be hindered by man: but let the mouth be stopt, the tongue cut out, the spirit of prayer cannot be restrained, *Neh.* ii. 4. Good Nehemiah could send up his soul to heaven, in a secret ejaculation, when it is not probable he uttered any thing. And, 1 *Sam.* i. 10. Hannah's lips only moved; her voice was not heard; yet the voice of her soul reached God's ear. *Exod.* xiv. 15. Wherefore criest thou unto me, saith the Lord to Moses, when we read not that he spake at all. The tongue of the spirit cannot be cut out. And hence follows two consequences, contrary to the former.

The spirit of prayer, is as much, or more, exercised *in secret, as in* company. The soul hath most-elbow-

room, when in the secret places of the stairs; when there is none but God present, then can the soul, with a holy confidence, boldness, and freedom, pour out itself into God's bosom: nor is it less careful, or circumspect when alone (unless under some temptation) than if all the world were present. *Anon.*

Many enjoy the assistance of the holy spirit in prayer, who cannot be persuaded of it. The publican had a great measure of the spirit, but could not believe it. His prayer, though short, had every evidence of being dictated by the Holy Ghost. It was scriptural, and the earnest desire of his heart; it proceeded from a deep sense of guilt and need, and was accompanied with great reverence; it was suited to his own condition, and mingled with some hope that the Lord would be merciful; in his application he was self-emptied, had no confidence in the flesh, and sent up his prayer in the name of Christ, and sought mercy through the propitiation. Thus persons may have the spirit without being sensible of it; and though any should have long asked, they should pray and not faint. *ibid.*

Affliction is a pill, which, if wrapped up in patience, may be easily swallowed: but when discontent puts us upon chewing it, proves bitter and disgusting. *Flavel.*

Impatience under affliction makes it much more grievous: like a man in a fever, who by tossing and tumbling exasperates the disease, and increases his own grief. *Anon.*

In the most afflicted condition of a saint, he has more reason to question his own love to God, than God's love to him. *ibid.*

What we are afraid to *do* before men, we should be afraid to *think* before God: because our secret thoughts are as obvious to the eyes of God as our actions to the eyes of men. *ibid.*

The want of love to Christ subjects to the curse, as well as positive enmity with all its dreadful effects. It *is not said*, if any man *hate* Christ, but if any man *love him not* let him be *anathema*. We do not mean that

there can be want of love without positive enmity. These are inseparable, or rather different degrees of the same thing; and there is no medium between loving and hating the redeemer. The holy spirit expresses himself in this manner to warn all, and assure them that though their opposition to Christ may not have discovered itself to others, or have *been* felt by themselves, yet if they have not positive love to him they perish with his worst, and most avowed enemies. Many deceive themselves by thinking that they do not hate Christ, because they never felt hatred to him *boiling* in their hearts, similar to that passion which breaks out when they reckon themselves injured by their neighbour, and think they do well to be angry: but they should remember that they as little feel the fire of love enflaming their hearts, and working with that ardency which love to a creature often produces, when it excites to use every means for the enjoyment of the beloved object. They cannot speak of Christ in the language, and with the affection of his spouse—*Him* whom my soul loveth; and as little do they feel the zeal of his house eating them up.

As the curse is here, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 22. denounced against the *not loving* of Christ, it is very remarkable that the execution of it in the last day, of which we have an account, *Math.* 25. proceeds in the same manner, and on the same grounds. Christ does not say, I was sick and ye endeavoured to make me worse, I was in prison and ye cried, away with me, and crucify me. They are condemned for the *want* of what they ought to have had, and for *not doing* what they should have done. The evidence will be summed up in the same manner about loving and not loving his members. Thus he addresses the righteous, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me; and thus the wicked, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least *of these, ye did it* not to me. Therefore when want of *love is proved*, the verdict is *guilty*, and the sentence. "*let him be anathema maranatha.*" ibi

Often, a horse on a journey has been so affrighted at a heap of hay on the way side as with difficulty to proceed, but on being brought up to it, finds it, instead of an object of terror, delicious and nourishing food. It is precisely so with the fearful believer, in respect of death. *ibid.*

There is much sweet and efficacious intercourse between Christ and his people in little time. Mary was distressed and wept. Jesus said Mary, Mary said Rabboni, and all was well. *ibid.*

Lysimachus, for extreme thirst, offered his kingdom to the Getæ, to quench it. His exclamation, when he had drank, is wonderfully striking: Ah! Wretched me, who, for such a momentary gratification, have lost so great a kingdom! How applicable this to the case of him, who, for the momentary pleasures of sin, parts with the kingdom of heaven! *Horne.*

He who seldom thinks of heaven, is not likely to get thither; as the only way to hit the mark, is to keep the eye fixed upon it. *ibid.*

Bees never work singly, but always in companies, that they may assist each other. An useful hint to scholars and christians. *ibid.*

The wisdom of God appears in afflictions. By these he separates the sin which he hates, from the son whom he loves. By these thorns he keeps him from breaking over into Satan's pleasant pastures, which would fatten him indeed, but only to the slaughter. *Anon.*

Could the hypocrites or sinners act in the manner they do, if they were impressed with the omniscience of the Redeemer! An habitual impression, that God is witness to, and well acquainted with every thought that passes in the heart, would be calculated to produce the happiest effects. But what shall we say! Christ told Judas that he knew the device of his heart; and Judas, though well warned, waxed worse and worse; and betrayed *him.* The devil firmly believes that God knows all his *thoughts;* and though he trembles, his malice is unrelenting, and his assiduity in sinning is unremitting.

Though he knows that God sees him every moment, he never for the shortest space desists from sinning—no, not though his chains hourly put him in mind that he will be called to an account, and receive everlasting punishment. Sinners are of their father the devil. Possessed of the same image, and actuated by the same spirit, they do his works. Ah! sin, what a thing art thou! will neither the inspecting eye of Jehovah, nor his mighty arm, lifted up in his threatenings, nor hell fire and chains of darkness stop thy mad career, and deter thee from running on the thick bosses of God's buckler! Will nothing stop thy rapid torrent, or change thy wandering course! nothing but the grace and love of that Redeemer whom Judas betrayed! *ibid.*

Some think variety of religions as pleasing to God as variety of flowers. Now, there can be but one religion which is true, and the God of truth cannot be pleased with falsehood, for the sake of variety. *Horne.*

Death will blow the bud of grace into the flower of glory. *Brooks.*

It was a sweet saying of an ancient Father, the name of Jesus is *mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilus in corde*, honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, and a jubilee in the heart. *Venning.*

Thorns and nettles are of a spreading nature; they feed themselves and fill the ground. Scarcely can any thing be conceived of such a spreading nature as sin; it contaminates the whole soul, and pervades all her faculties; it runs through the members of the body as blood through the veins, and disseminates itself through the whole conversation, and so powerfully, that all the sinner's actions, not only partake of the noxious nature, but, are spreading branches of that fatal weed, the root of which is in the evil heart. In many other ways does the diffusive nature of sin discover itself. The sinner goes from one degree of sin to another, and from one kind less atrocious or scandalous, to another still more so. The *progress* of sin is emphatically set before us *in that gradation*, Psalm i. 1. Blessed is the man that

walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. In proportion as sin gains ground, temptations meet with less opposition, and the heart is more accessible, till the poor sinner becomes an easy prey to Satan, and is led captive by him at his will.—One thing always happens, where thorns and nettles are luxuriant, and in great abundance: They become a *receptacle for wild beasts, and poisonous creatures.* Should any person enter the place, this increases the danger: he is not only exposed to the sharp prickle of the thorn, but the venomous bite of the creatures which nestle and lurk there. The heart of the sinner is a cage of every unclean bird, and filled with the brood of the old serpent, which is numerous, poisonous, and advancing to maturity. In a corrupt and impure church, too, the contagion spreads, and she waxes worse and worse. The worst of men, and the most hurtful opinions, find ready reception. Among the nettles and thorns the foxes hide themselves, and spoil the vines. When corruption is introduced, and allowed, from small beginnings it soon grows to an enormous size. *Anon.*

The divine blessing includes powerful virtue from the Lord, accompanying outward mercies and spiritual means, without which, they could not answer the end. Without a certain concurring virtue, outward mercies would be useless, and inefficacious. Bread would be as stones, and our food like scorpions. Besides this, there is a secret virtue, which makes persons *enjoy* these mercies; this is mentioned Acts xiv, 17. God left not himself without a witness in that he did good, filling our hearts with food and *gladness.* There we have an account not only of the outward blessing coming from God, but likewise the enjoyment of it.

Virtue of another kind, is equally necessary, to make any spiritual mean answer the great design for which it *is appointed.* This is the energy of the Holy Ghost, *which is* absolutely necessary, and alone efficacious. *This is* to the christian more than his soul is to his bo-

dy. By it he is quickened and supported, enlightened and revived. By this energy is not merely meant the inhabitation of the spirit, but his active agency, without which the promises are dark and sapless, ordinances lifeless and unprofitable, and duties tasteless and insipid. When this agency is powerfully exerted, and the precious influences of the spirit are bestowed in a large measure, they constitute the sweet attainments, which is known by the name of manifestations, communion, and the enjoyment of God. These give the most peculiar relish to religious exercises. Such enjoyments make the believer's happy seasons, and sweetly constrain him to say, This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. Then God is glorified, and the enlarged heart runs with pleasure in the way of his precepts.

The blessing is always suited to the case of those on whom it is bestowed: among the saints, some need one thing, and some another. The Lord makes his blessing suit them all. He quickens one, and comforts another; he supports the weak, and succours the tempted; he revives the declining, and visits the deserted; he gives the blind their sight, and raises up the bowed down; he heals the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds; he executeth judgment for the oppressed, giveth food to the hungry, and looseth the prisoners. The blessing has always such effects, as carry indubitable evidence, that it comes from a gracious God. It dispels our fears, and quiets the mind; it endears ordinances, and gives them peculiar relish; it sweetens all our outward mercies, and alleviates our trials; it fills the heart with desire for the full enjoyment of God, and makes the saint resolve to wait on the Lord, till that happy period arrive. In one word, the blessing is the pledge and foretaste of glory. When the Lord bestows one saving mercy, he says, I will see you again. The blessing is a cluster from the land of promise, proclaiming the *riches of* that distant country, kindly inviting to *it, and supporting* in the way. Among all saving bles-

sings there is an indissoluble connection. Grace and glory are inseparable. This is taught by the apostle, *Rom.* viii. 30, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. *Anon.*

The energy of the cross of Christ is beyond the force of thunder, and it is more mild than the dew on the tender grass. *Mc Laurin.*

The grace by which we are saved is free: It is so free that we cannot possibly apprehend any thing to be so free as it is. It rises up in the heart of God towards us, without any mixture, *ab extra*, or out of God himself. It is the fulfilling of the good pleasure of his goodness, 2 *Thess.* i. 11. A reason may be given from the grace of God, for all that which he doth in the salvation of sinners; but the good pleasure of his will is the only reason why he is gracious to sinners. The grace which is in God, is the motive and cause of every thing which he doth to save in a way of mercy; but there is nothing out of God, which is the motive or cause of his grace.

The grace which is in God, is moved by nothing, but hath its motion only in and from itself, and is the cause of all that which God doth for us. If God elect us in Christ, it is because of his grace; if he give Christ to die for us, it is because of his grace; if he confer happiness upon us, when we are not only without merit, but when every thing in the whole frame and constitution of our souls is contrary to the lowest degree of merit, it is because of his grace; if he bear with us, when we are provoking criminals, it is because of his grace; if he glorify his truth, in the performance of his promise, it is because of his grace; if he commiserate us in our distress, and relieve us in our indigence, it is because of his grace; if he justify our persons, if he forgive our sins, if he renew and sanctify our natures, if he preserve in us the renewing and sanctifying grace which he hath given, if he strengthen the grace which he hath preserved, and if he perfect the grace which

he hath strengthened, it is because he is gracious in himself. The grace which is in God, is the cause of all the good which he gives to us, or doth for us; but no other reason can be given why God is gracious to us, but only because he has eternally purposed in himself to be gracious to us. *Taylor (Richard.)*

The believer preferreth Christ before a thousand worlds: all other things, all advantages, whatsoever, are but loss and dung in comparison of Christ, *Phil.* iii. 8. The church esteems her well-beloved the chief of ten thousand, *Song* v. 10. Why, what seeth she in Christ above others? What is thy beloved above other beloveds? She seeth in him such purity of nature, such power of merit, such perfection of love, such freedom in promises, and such truth in performances, as nothing in the world can so affect her: She seeth him every way more beautiful than the sons of men, *Psal.* xlv. 3. therefore, she sells all for the pearl of great price, as the disciples left all, to follow Christ. *Anon.*

I have nothing to do with the devil, neither hath he given me any disturbance all the time of my sickness. But, be it so, let him come, let him attack me, and try his strength upon me a poor miserable sinner; I will not therefore despond in my mind; for I know that I have not sinned against him, but against my God; wherefore, following the example of the Israelites in the wilderness, I will shew to him not the brazen serpent indeed, but the Son of God hanging upon the cross; and I will say, it is against this person I have sinned, and not against thee; to him I wholly commit myself, for I believe he hath paid a sufficient price to God the Father for my sins. Wherefore be gone, O devil, and turn thy darts against the seed of the woman: if you overcome him, you overcome me also. *Gesner.*

Here is the grave, the wrath of God, and devouring flames, the just punishment of sin, on the one side; and here am I, a poor sinful soul, on the other side: but *this is my comfort*, the covenant of grace which is established upon so many sure promises, hath saved all. *There is an act* of oblivion passed in heaven: I will

forgive their iniquities, and their sins will I remember no more. This is the blessed privilege of all within the covenant, among whom I am one. *Lyford.*

O it is sweet at all times, especially at such a time, to see the reconciled face of God through Jesus Christ, and hear the voice of peace through the blood of the cross. *Flavel.*

O Lord God, I thank thee that thou wouldst have me to be poor and a beggar upon the earth: I have no house, land, possession, or money, to leave. Thou hast given me a wife and children: to thee I return them: nourish, teach, and save them, as hitherto thou hast me, O Father of the fatherless, and Judge of the widows! O my heavenly Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of all consolations, I thank thee that thou hast revealed thy son Jesus Christ to me, on whom I have believed, whom I have professed, whom I have loved, whom I have celebrated; whom the bishop of Rome and all the multitude of the wicked do persecute and reproach. I pray thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, receive my soul. My heavenly Father, although I am taken out of this life, though I must now lay down this body, yet I certainly know that I shall dwell with thee for ever, neither can I by any be plucked out of thine hands. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Luther.

I have more than a thousand times vowed to God that I would mend; but I never performed what I promised: for the future I will vow no more, because I have learned by experience that I cannot perform. And unless God be propitious to me for Christ's sake, and grant me a happy hour when I shall depart this life, I shall never be able to stand with my vows and good works. *Staupicius.*

There is but one sun that giveth light unto the *world; there* is but one righteousness, there is but one *communion* of saints. If I were the excellentest crea-

ture in the world, if I were as righteous as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (for they were excellent men in the world) yet we must all confess that we are great sinners, and that there is no salvation but in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and we have all need of the grace of God. And for my part, as concerning death, I feel such joy of spirit, that if I should have the sentence of life on one side, and the sentence of death on the other side, I had rather choose a thousand times (seeing God hath appointed the separation) the sentence of death than the sentence of life. *Deering.*

All that antinomianism which the orthodox preachers of free grace are falsely charged with lies here, because they maintain that the first thing a convinced sinner is to eye, in his turning to God, is the free grace and mercy of God in Christ for the pardon of sin. Evangelical conviction leads him to a reliance upon Christ in some degree of saving faith for the pardon of all his sins, and this faith begets in him a secret hope of pardon, and is the spring of all after-sanctification, viz. of mortification of sin, of repentance, and of all new obedience. Let this be remembered, as the main thing we contend about, that we begin our religion at the grace of God, and do not think to ground our faith in Christ upon any legal preparations or works of our own. *Cole.*

The doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience, that was invented against antinomianism, may well be ranked among the worst antinomian errors. For my part I hate it with perfect hatred, and count it mine enemy, as I have found it to be: and I have found, by some good experience, the truth of the lesson taught by the apostle, that the way to be freed from the mastery and dominion of sin is not to be under the law, but under grace. *Marshal.*

If the goodness of God is so admirably seen in the works of nature and the favours of providence, with what a noble superiority does it even triumph in the mystery of redemption! Redemption is the brightest mirror *in which to contemplate* this most lovely attribute of the

Deity. Other gifts are only as mites from the divine treasury; but redemption opens, I had almost said exhausts, all the stores of his glorious grace. Herein God commendeth his love; not only manifests, but renders it perfectly marvellous; manifests it in so stupendous a manner, that it is beyond parallel, beyond thought, and above all blessing and praise. *Hervey.*

Grace is so free, that the mercy we abuse, the Name we have prophaned, the Name of which we have deserved wrath, opens its mouth with pleas for us. His name, while it pleads for them, mentions their demerits, that grace might appear to be grace indeed, and triumph in its own sweetness. *Charnock.*

The righteousness of Christ imputed to a believer frees him from the obligation of yielding obedience to be his justifying righteousness, but adds an infinite obligation to obedience in point of gratitude; purchases and procures grace for enabling to obey to all the other ends thereof, expiates the imperfection of his personal obedience, and renders its sincerity acceptable. *Glascock.*

The following letter was originally written by an eminently learned, as well as pious minister, and was addressed to a brother of the same character. A copy of it came into my hands in a very providential manner. It breathes a spirit of such unaffected piety, and is so replete with good sense, as well as with the sterling maxims of practical religion, that I considered it as no mean acquisition. Several of my friends, having requested transcripts of it, acknowledge that they are never cloyed with reading it, nor ever take it into their hands without experiencing an accession both of pleasure and improvement. PHILADELPHUS.

Rev. and very dear Brother,

I received your very obliging letter, and have thought on the important question, which you stated in it;—"How a christian, who wishes to live on the confines *of heaven*, and as an heir of eternal glory, ought to live *in this vale of* tears?" The inquiry does not find me

altogether unprovided. It is one of the most ordinary and familiar subjects of meditation with me; and one of the principal suits, which I daily carry to the throne of my God and Father.

That man knows neither his own heart, nor the world he lives in, who finds it not exceedingly difficult to break through the entanglements and surmount the discouragements of the present state. It is hard indeed, to keep the helm up against so many deceitful tides, and disheartening cross winds, as we meet with in this *sea of fire and glass*. Creature-smiles intice away the heart from Jesus Christ, on whom alone it ought to centre. Creature-frowns discompose and tempestuate the spirit, that it thinks well to be angry. Both ways, grace is a loser. The greatest of our conflicts, and causes of complaint, seem to originate from either the first or the last of these sources. Temptations follow tempers: And there are two predominant propensions in every temper,—a desire of exemption from what flesh and blood call evil, and a lust after those things, which blind passion, in flat contradiction to both reason and revelation, hath ranked among the objects of choice. This consideration makes it absolutely necessary, that the expectants of glory should *know themselves*, and should *watch and pray that they enter not into temptation.*

But I should attempt a more particular answer to your question, by telling you, in a familiar way, *what God hath done for my soul*; and in what manner it is my desire and hourly endeavour, through the grace of my God directing and enabling me, to order my own steps in this world of shadows.

I am come to a settled resolution, formed as a conclusion drawn, both from the testimony of God in his word, and from my own experience of the world's vanity, to look for no great things from it, and to expect no one great thing in it, but to *know* CHRIST *and* HIM *crucified*. I make best way in a low gale. A high *spirit, and a high sail* together, will be dangerous; and

therefore I prepare to live low. I desire not much. I pray against it. So much as to enable me to discharge the duties of my important calling, and to abound in these without distraction, I am bound to pray for; and more I desire not. By my state of retirement from the world and seclusion from its affairs, I have the advantage to observe, how the occasions and distractions of every day insensibly wear off the heart from God, and bury it under a growing load of cares and heart-overwhelming anxieties. A thing this, which those who live in lumber cannot be sensible of. I see a need of every thing God gives me; and that I want nothing he denies me. There is no dispensation of Providence, however afflictive, but either in, or after it, I find I could not have been so well without it. Whether the thing be taken from me, or laid on me, sooner or later God quiets me in himself. I cast all my cares on the Lord, and live securely and contentedly on the care, wisdom, and mercy of my Heavenly Father. My ways, you know, are in some sense, hedged up with thorns, and grow darker and darker daily: But yet I distrust not my God in the least, in regard to the comfortable issue of the whole of his providential conduct toward me. I live more quietly in the absence of all, by faith, than I could do, I am persuaded, if I possessed them. I think, indeed, the Lord deals kindly with me, when he makes me *believe* for all my mercies before I have them. They are then *Isaacs*, sons of slaughter. The less that reason hath to work upon, the more freely does faith cast itself on the faithfulness of God. I find, while faith is steady, nothing can disquiet me; and when faith totters, nothing can establish me. If I tumble out among means and creatures, I am presently lost, and can come to no end; but if I stay myself on God, and leave him to work in his own way and time, I am at rest, and can sit down; yea, lie down, and sleep on a promise, even when a thousand rise up *against me*. Wherefore, my way is, not to cast before *hand, but* to work and walk as an unerring Providence

chalks out my way. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. I find so much to do with my own calling, and my own heart, that I have no time to puzzle myself with peradventures and futurities. With respect to the state of the times, it is, no doubt, very gloomy and tempestuous; but why should the christian be discouraged? Faith lies at anchor in the midst of these waves, and believes the accomplishment of God's promise, that the present as well as the past shakings of the nations, shall finally terminate in the more illustrious display of the Mediator's glory. On this God do I live, who is our God for ever, and will be our guide even to death. Methinks, I lie becalmed in the bosom of the promise, as *Luther* was, in the prospect of the German calamities which quickly followed his death. Truly, I am not *anxiously* concerned. Christ, who is given to be head over all things to the church which is his body, will see to it. His name is Jehovah-Jireh. It is said to *this* day, in the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen. I know prophecies are now dark, and the books are sealed, and men have all been deceived, and every cistern fails;—yet God continues faithful. Faithful is he that hath promised. I believe, these dark times are the womb of a morning, more bright than any that has yet arisen on the church.

Many things more I might have said, but my paper reminds me that I have already gone beyond the bounds of an ordinary letter. O brother, let us keep close to God, and then we need fear nothing. Let us maintain intimate communion with God, and then a little of the creature will go a great way. Let us spend much time with God in private. Let us not croud religion into a corner of the day. The Dutch have a very significant proverb,—"Nothing is got by thieving, or lost by praying." Let us lay all our good in God, so as to overbalance the sweetness as well as the bitterness of all creatures. Let us spend no time on anxiously fore-hand contrivances for this world. They never succeed. God will *run his dispensations* another way. Self-contrivances

are the effects of unbelief. I can speak from experience. Would men spend those hours, which they run out in laying plots and devices, in communion with God, and leave all to him by venturous believing, they would have more peace and comfort.

And now, I leave you with your God and mine. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Pray for your own soul: Pray for Jerusalem: and pray hard for

Your affectionate Brother.

Sonnet de Des Barreaux.

Grand Dieu, tes jugemens sont remplis d'équité;
Toujours tu prends plaisir à nous être propice:
Mais j'ai tant fait de mal, que jamais ta bonté
Ne me pardonnera qu'en blessant ta justice.

Oui, Seigneur, la grandeur de mon impiété
Ne laisse à ton pouvoir que le choix du supplice:
Ton intérêt s'oppose à ma félicité,
Et ta clémence même attend que je périsse.

Contente ton désir, puisqu'il t'est glorieux:
Offense-toi des pleurs qui coulent de mes yeux:
Tonne, frappe, il est temps; rends-moi guerre pour guerre.
J'adore en périssant la raison qui t'aigrit:
Mais dessus quel endroit tombera ton tonnerre,
Qui ne soit tout couvert du sang de Jesus-Christ?

Though unspeakably inferior to the inimitable original, the following translation is inserted for English readers:—

Great God! thy just awards who dare to scan,
Propitious all thy ways to sinful man;
But ne'er to me thy mercy can be reach'd,
Forgiving me, thy justice is impeach'd.

Yes, oh my God! I've sinn'd so in th' extreme,
Thy pow'r no choice has left, but, to condemn;
Thy interest must each hope of bliss destroy,
And clemency awaits my fate with joy.

Be thy will done, thy glorious purpose prove;
Let e'en these burning tears offend thy love:
Flash, flash ye lightnings, strike the foe of God;
I bend in perishing and kiss the rod.
But on what spot can vengeance pour its flood,
Which is not cover'd with a Saviour's blood!

I am that I am.

"Tell them I AM," Jehovah said
To Moses, while earth heard in dread;
And, smitten to the heart,
At once, above, beneath, around,
All nature without voice or sound,
Reply'd, oh "Lord! THOU ART."

FINIS.

SELECT REMAINS

OF THE

REV. JOHN MASON, A. M.

LATE RECTOR OF

WATER-STRATFORD, IN THE COUNTY OF BUCKS;

CONTAINING

A VARIETY OF DEVOUT USEFUL SAYINGS ON DIVERS SUBJECTS, DIGESTED UNDER PROPER HEADS; RELIGIOUS OBSERVATIONS; SERIOUS ADVICE TO YOUTH; OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS, AND CHRISTIAN LETTERS.

RECOMMENDED BY THE

LATE REV. J. WATTS, D. D.

A NEW EDITION.

NEW-YORK:

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D. & G. Bruce, Printers.

1809.

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PREFACE.

THE author of these Select Remains was a person of as eminent a character in the religious world as most ages have produced. He was by principle a conformist to the Church of England, and died at Water-Stratford, in the county of Bucks, A. D. 1694, having been rector of that place twenty years. He was father to him who wrote the treatise on self-knowledge, a book which has been of great use to many souls.

Several who were his cotemporaries have left some account of the author of these Select Remains, and in particular, his successor to the rectory of Water-Stratford.

Mr. Hemmet gives this testimony to his character:—

My acquaintance with Mr. Mason I have esteemed one of the greatest mercies I ever received. His learning and piety were great, and his humility deep. Divers souls in the neighbourhood wherein he lived were seals of his ministry. His affections were so fervent, and his zeal so great, that as they were the comfort, so they were the admiration of those that feared God and lived near him. So great was his love to Christ, that he had a value for any one that spoke a savory word of him.

Mr. Baxter said, he was the glory of the Church of England.

The frame of his spirit was so heavenly, his deportment so humble and obliging, his discourse of spiritual things (and little else could we hear from him) so weighty, with such apt words and delightful air, that it charmed all who had any spiritual relish.

And another writer observes,—If ever man made religion his greatest business and pleasure, he did. How much he was in his element at prayer, appears from the *frequent discharge* of that duty, viz. six times every

day as long as he was able,—twice by himself, twice with his wife, and twice with his family. The first posture he was in every morning as soon as he was out of bed was upon his knees, and the same as soon as he returned from a journey. His religious converse was neither forced nor affected, but accompanied with an easy and cheerful address; which made it agreeable and entertaining.

Such are the testimonies which are given to this excellent man, whose evangelical and select sentences are here offered to the public; they cannot be opened without offering a divine morsel to a hungry soul, a soul united to a precious Christ, or is sincerely seeking so to be. It will be a sweet pocket companion when on a journey as well as in the parlour, the kitchen, or the workshop. Reader, labour to obtain all the experience which is in this little manual.

TO

THE REVEREND JOHN MASON,

AT DARKING, IN SURRY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I was pleased when you informed me that you have a design to print a new edition of the SELECT REMAINS of your reverend grandfather. 'Tis very agreeable to hear, that the spirit and temper which runs through that book, is so far maintained amongst us, that there are sufficient readers to encourage these *Remains* to be republished. I have often thought, that this collection of Short Sentences, under various heads, are very proper to attend christians of the middle rank of life, either in the parlour or kitchen, in the shop or work-house; and for that end I have been a frequent purchaser of them to distribute in families among private christians.

By spending one minute in reading these sentences now and then, serious persons may find sufficient matter to furnish them with frequent pious meditations in every circumstance of the christian life; and they may be as happily useful in the retirements of the closet.

The style and manner appears to me much like that of the late Rev. Mr. Henry, whose practical works have been so universally esteemed. Though there is not any affectation of a train of close reasoning here, or magnificent and new ideas, which would tempt the polite and learned world to peruse them; yet a serious christian of the highest rank, can hardly read many of these sayings, without an inward relish and taste of them.

The letters to his friends shew the reader, that the writer was always in heaven, and may teach him upon every occasion to bring religion into his converse with his friends, whether by writing or speaking.

Upon the whole, I cannot but conceive it to be an useful service to mankind, to have these papers spread abroad in the world; and that every occasion may be taken to support a sense of religion amidst the many temptations of this life. And if you imagine, sir, that my opinion may be of any advantage, you have free leave to make this letter public as you please.

I am, sir,
Your affectionate brother,
and humble servant,
I. WATTS.

Newington, Oct. 24, 1741.

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SELECT REMAINS,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

Containing a variety of devout and useful sayings, digested under proper heads.

Moral observations and instructions.

THOUGH few there be that care to be virtuous, yet fewer they are that would not desire to be counted so.

Nothing but what is God's dishonour, should be our shame.

We must not walk by example, but by rule.

They that drive away time, spur a free horse.

As often as a man lays out for God, he lays up for himself.

We have nothing that we can properly call our own, but what we have reason to be ashamed of.

We are never well informed of the truth, till we are conformed to the truth.

A conceit of knowledge is the greatest enemy to knowledge, and the greatest argument of ignorance.

We remember many things we should forget, (as injuries, disappointments, &c.) but forget what we should remember, *viz.* God and our souls.

They that presume most in prosperity, are soonest subject to despair in adversity.

Man may commend thee, but God may condemn thee.

When God punishes another, he threatens thee; when he wounds another, he warns thee.

It is as great a mercy to be preserved in health, as to be delivered from sickness.

If you mind nothing but the body, you lose body and soul too. If you mind nothing but earth, you lose earth and heaven too.

As they, who for every slight infirmity take physic to repair their health, do rather impair it; so they, who for every trifle are eager to vindicate their character, do rather weaken it.

Honesty is the best policy, and innocence the best wisdom.

Improve the wit you have bought at a dear rate, and the wisdom you have gained by sad experience.

Learn of Christ, who was sensible of injuries, yet patient under them.

Be cheerful, but not light; solid, but not sad.

Keep the body under, but the spirit up.

Keep such company as God keeps.

What can you get by bad company? If you are truly good, they will either taunt you or despise you.

Take heed of being infected with the breath of a prophane heart.

Let the body wait upon the soul, and both wait upon God.

Speak not well of yourself, nor ill of others.

Speak of people's virtues, conceal their infirmities: if you can say no good, say no ill of them.

To render good for evil is God-like; to render good for good is man-like; to render evil for evil, is beast-like; to render evil for good is devil-like.

Carry yourselves submissively towards your superiors; friendly towards your equals; condescendingly towards your inferiors; generously towards your enemies; and lovingly towards all.

Of religion in general.

It signifies nothing to say we will not change our *religion*, if our religion change not us.

If a man lives and dies a mere professor, it had been better for him if he had lived and died a mere heathen.

The duty of religion flows from a principle of religion.

It is not talking, but walking with God, that gives a man the denomination of a Christian.

Darkness may as well put on the name of light, as a wicked man the name of a Christian.

It is our main business in this world, to insure an interest in the next.

A desire of happiness is natural, a desire of holiness is supernatural.

If God hath done that good for us which he hath denied to the world, we ought to do that service for him which is denied him by the world.

If we are willing, God will help us; if sincere, God will accept us.

A serious remembrance of God, is the fountain of obedience to God.

If you forget God when you are young, God may forget you when you are old.

When a christian considers the goodness of God's ways, he wonders that all the world doth not walk in them. But when he considers the blindness, and depravity, and prejudice of the heart by nature, he wonders that any should enter upon them.

Make your calling sure, and your election is sure.

Uneven walking, with a neglect of watching, makes a disconsolate soul.

Four things a christian should especially labour after, viz. to be humble and thankful, watchful and cheerful.

If we would not fall into things unlawful, we must sometimes deny ourselves in those that are lawful.

Salvation then draws near to man when it is his main *care.*

The ordinances of God are the means of salvation; but the God of ordinances is the author of salvation.

Religion must be our business, then it will be our delight.

It will cost something to be religious, it will cost more not to be so.

A christian's life is nothing else but a short trial of his graces.

Lukewarmness is the best natural, but worst spiritual temper a man can be in.

There are few but are sometimes in a serious fit; but how few are in a serious frame, who have not an abiding sense of God upon their hearts;

It is a voluntary *cannot* that keeps the soul from God.

The gate which leads to life is a strait gate, therefore we should fear; it is an open gate, therefore we should hope.

Do the Lord's work in the Lord's time; pray whilst God hears; hear whilst God speaks; believe whilst God promises; obey whilst God commands.

That man hath no sense of mercy, that wants a sense of duty.

Two duties must run through a christian's life, like the warp through the woof, blessing and trusting.

Religion is much talked of, but little understood, till the conscience be awakened; then a man knows the worth of a soul and the want of a Saviour.

Then doth religion flourish in the soul, when it knows how to naturalize spiritual things, and to spiritualize natural things.

We may judge of our eternal state by our spiritual state; and our spiritual state by the delightful and customary actions of our lives.

If we expect to live with Christ in heaven we must live to him on earth.

We may expect God's protection so long as we keep *within bounds*.

Our opportunities are (like our souls) very precious; *but if they* are lost, they are irrecoverably lost.

That preaching which is plain, pure, powerful, and practical, men are apt to dislike.

Religion begins with a knowledge of a man's self, and is perfected with the knowledge of God.

This is a threefold mystery; a gospel published in the midst of an ungodly world; a little church preserved in the midst of devils; and a little grace kept alive in the midst of corruptions.

The service of God is the soul's work; and the favour of God is its reward.

A man may be perfect in his obedience, and yet impartial.

God never fails them that wait for him, nor forsakes them that work for him.

It is a sign of advanced grace when opinion is swallowed up of religion.

Of God.

That there is a God, may be proved by considering the manner of propagation of mankind by generation. Thus, (1.) There must have been *one first man.* (2.) This first man must have had some *maker.* (3.) This maker of him must himself be *unmade.* Therefore, (4.) there must have been eternally some *unmade* being; and that is God.

We may truly conceive of God, though we cannot fully conceive of him. We may have right apprehensions of him, though not an exact comprehension of him.

Then our conceptions of God's attributes are carnal, when our high thoughts of one gives us low thoughts of another.

His goodness makes his majesty amiable, and his majesty makes his goodness wonderful. His love is not abated by his greatness, nor his greatness by his love. His holiness hinders him not from dwelling with the poor in spirit.

Nothing is great enough for him to admire, who is

infinite majesty; nothing is mean enough for him to despise, who is infinite mercy.

God deals with his servants, not as a passionate master, but as a compassionate father.

What pleaseth God should please us, because it pleaseth God.

A sight of God begins a saint on earth, and perfects him in heaven.

God takes notice of every particular man, as if there were none else; and yet takes notice of all as if they were but one man.

God repented that he made man, but never repented that he redeemed man.

We cannot live naturally without God, how then can we live happily without him.

We may know what God intends for us by what he hath wrought in us.

They that have God for their God, have angels for their guard.

Many have lost for God, but none ever lost by God. If they have lost in temporals, they have been eternal gainers, *Matth.* xix. 29.

This is a sure rule: *God never takes any thing from his people, but he gives them something better in the stead of it.*

God is a great God, and therefore we should wait upon him; he is a good God, and therefore it is not in vain to wait upon him.

A man may be a worshipper of the true God, and yet not a true worshipper of God.

The lowest reverence is due to the highest majesty.

Fear God for his power, trust him for his wisdom, love him for his goodness, praise him for his greatness, believe him for his faithfulness, and adore him for his holiness.

All creatures are as nothing compared with God, and *absolutely* nothing without God.

Of the fear of God.

They that fear God least, have the greatest reason to fear him.

A fear of departing from God is a good means to keep us from departing from him.

The more we fear God, the less we shall fear men.

They that will not fear God in prosperity, will be afraid of him in adversity.

Of the presence of God.

If God's earthly presence is so good, what is his heavenly presence?

If God's being with us is so sweet, what is it to be with God?

There is joy in God's gracious presence, but in his glorious presence there is fulness of joy.

There are pleasures in approaching to God here, but at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

The nearer we are to Christ, the nearer is God to us.

The presence of God's glory is in heaven, the presence of his power on earth, the presence of his justice in hell, and the presence of his grace with his people. If he deny us his powerful presence we fall into nothing; if he deny us his gracious presence we fall into sin; if he deny us his merciful presence we fall into hell.

Of the love of God.

If the love of God set us on work, the God of love will pay us our wages.

We hated God without a cause, and he loved us without a cause.

Love begets love, 'tis a flame that communicates itself. *They that* have much forgiven them, much done *for them, much* laid out for them, and much laid up for *them, will love* much.

Our love to God is the reflection of his love to us; 1 John iv. 19. *We love him because he first loved us.*

Of Christ.

Christ made himself like to us, that he might make us like to himself.

Christ must needs have died, how else could sin be expiated, the law satisfied, the devil conquered, and man be saved?

They that deny themselves for Christ, shall enjoy themselves in Christ.

Men had rather hear of Christ crucified for them, than be crucified for Christ.

If Christ denied innocent nature out of love to us, shall not we deny corrupt nature out of love to him.

Christ by his death appeared to be the son of man, by his resurrection he appeared to be the son of God.

Christ was the great promise of the Old Testament, the spirit is the great promise of the New.

Christ's strength is the christian's strength.

If we would stand, Christ must be our foundation; if we would be safe, Christ must be our sanctuary.

In regard of natural life, we live in God; in regard of spiritual life, Christ lives in us.

He that thinks he hath no need of Christ, hath too high thoughts of himself; he that thinks Christ cannot help him, hath too low thoughts of Christ.

Presumption abuses Christ, despair refuses him.

Christ satisfied God to the uttermost, and therefore can save sinners to the uttermost.

The blood of Christ which satisfied the justice of God, may satisfy the conscience of an awakened sinner.

If sin was better known, Christ would be better thought of.

If sin doth not taste bitter, Christ cannot taste sweet.

When sin is hell, Christ is heaven.

There is no passage from sin to holiness, till we are *passed from* sin to Christ.

Christ may have an interest in us, though we may not be able to see our interest in him.

Christ hath entreated God to be reconciled to us, and now he entreats us to be reconciled to God.

God will give us nothing for our sakes, but he will deny us nothing for Christ's sake.

None are so low as Christ was, none so lowly, none so loving.

We may know what Christ hath done for us, by what he hath done in us.

Creatures die that our Bodies may live, Christ died that our souls may live.

Our judge, instead of condemning us, stept from the bench and died for us.

Christ is to be a believer's judge, and if he was to chuse his judge he could not chuse a better friend.

As God glorifies Christ in heaven, so the spirit glorifies him on earth, in the hearts of believers.

A believer's comfort in living, is to live to Christ; and in dying, it is that he shall go to Christ.

The blood of Christ upon the heart is the greatest blessing, upon the head is the greatest curse.

It matters not who are our accusers, if Christ be our advocate.

Christ's Blood	*is the Soul's*	*Ransom,*
Christ's Spirit		*Comforter,*
Christ's Word		*Food,*
Christ's Supper		*Feast,*
The Lord's Day		*Market Day.*

A christian may triumph in the death of Christ! "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? O hell! where is thy terror? O world! where is thy malice? O sin! where is thy strength? O my soul! where are thine accusers?"

There is no honour like a relation to Christ; no riches like the graces of Christ; no learning like the knowledge of Christ; and no persons like the servants of Christ.

Christ executes the office of a prophet in our calling,

of a priest in our justification, and of a king in our sanctification; let us then hear him as our prophet, rely on him as our priest, and obey him as our king. Think not the worse of him for his manger or his cross. As he ceaseth not to be man in his highest estate, so he was God in his lowest. His words were oracles, and his works miracles. His life was a pattern; his death a sacrifice; his resurrection glorious; his ascension triumphant; his intercession prevalent; and his coming again will be magnificent. All the angels in heaven adore him; all the devils in hell fear him; and all the sons and daughters of Adam must stand before him.

Own Christ's person, love his name, embrace his doctrine, obey his commands, and submit to his cross. His person is lovely, his name is sweet, his doctrines are comfortable, his commands are rational, and his cross honourable. The very angels admire him, and shall not we?

A depraved understanding will not yield that the creature is so bad, and that Christ is so good!

O! did we but know ourselves, and our Saviour! We are poor, but he is rich; we are dead, but he is life; we are sin, but he is righteousness; we are guiltiness, but he is grace; we are misery, but he is mercy; we are lost, but he is salvation:—If we are willing, he never was otherwise—He ever lives, ever loves, ever pities, ever pleads. He loves and saves to the uttermost, all that come unto him.

A pathetic invitation to sinners to come to Christ.

Have you sins, or have you none?—If you have, whither should you go, but to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world?—Have you souls, or have you none?—If you have, whither should you go but to the Saviour of souls? Is there a life to come, or *is there* not? If there is, whither should you go but to *him, who* only hath the words of eternal life? Is there a wrath to come, or is there not?—If there is, whither

should you go but to him who only can deliver from the wrath to come?—And will he not receive you?—If he yielded himself into the hands of them that sought his life, will he hide himself from the hearts of them that seek his mercy? If he was willing to be taken by the hands of violence, is he not much more willing to be taken by the hands of faith? He that died for thy sins, will he cast thee off for thine infirmities? O come, come, come!—I charge you come—I beseech you come—come and he will give you life. Come, and he will give you rest. Come, and he will receive you. Knock and he will open to you. Look to him and he will save you.—Did any ever come to him for a cure, and go away without it?—Thou wouldst find something in thyself, but thou findest nothing—but what thou hast reason to be ashamed of; but let not that hinder, but further thy coming.—Come as thou art; come poor, come needy, come naked, come empty, come wretched, only come, only believe; his heart is free, his arms are open, it is his joy and his crown to receive thee.—If thou art willing, he never was otherwise.

Of the love of Christ.

Nothing grieves Christ more, than to have his love slighted: nothing pleaseth him more than to have it accepted.

The love of Christ is stronger than death, sweeter than life, and better than wine.

Every new sense of Christ's love, adds new degrees to ours.

The love of Christ has a height without a top, a depth without a bottom, a length without an end, and a breadth without a limit. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

Christ's sorrows, griefs, and sufferings, can be paralleled with nothing but his love.

Of saints or true believers.

God hath no sons that are unlike himself.

Believers are children of the same family, members of the same son, and habitations of the same spirit; fellow-citizens, fellow-servants, fellow-soldiers, fellow travellers, and fellow heirs.

None are so easily acquainted, so close knit together, and so much endeared to one another, as real christians.

One true christian differs from another without breach of charity, as friends love one another, though in different garbs.

It is not so considerable in a christian, what his judgment is, as what his temper is.

Heart-work is better than head-work; and, it is a better temper to be fervent in charity, than in disputes.

Better be a melancholy saint, than a mad sinner.

If good men are sad, it is not because they are good, but because they are not better.

Whom God chooses, the world refuses.

God's gold is the world's dross. They of whom the world is not worthy, are counted not worthy to live in the world.

If believers are condemned by the world, let them remember that they shall not be condemned with the world. Sin cannot live in a believer, nor a believer cannot live in sin.

A good man is so far acquainted with the corruption of his own heart, that, instead of condemning others, he is apt to account them better than himself.

A child of God had rather ten thousand times suffer for Christ, than that Christ should suffer by him.

The imperfections of a believer's sanctification make him continually depend on Christ for his justification.

When a child of God thinks he can go alone, he is *nearest falling.*

A true christian may be weary in serving God, but *God is never* weary of serving him.

He is neither afraid of dying or living; he desires to go to heaven to see Christ, yet is willing to stay upon earth to serve Christ.

If the children of God did but know what was best for them, they would perceive that God did that which is best for them.

A christian shall be here as long as he hath any work to do for Christ, or as long as Christ has any work to accomplish in him: Christ will fit him for himself, and then take him to himself.

A true christian lives like a saint, and begs like a sinner.

All God's children have received God's spirit, whereby they are made humble, believing, and holy; humble in regard of their sins; believing in regard of Christ, and holy in regard of their conscience and care to keep all God's commandments.

A good deal of the trouble of God's people ariseth from a mistake and misapprehension of God: they judge of God by their sense, not by his promise: by their own frame, and not by his constant nature.

As saints have groanings unutterable, so they have joys unspeakable.

A christian is what he is between God and his own soul.

All saints have had their doubtings. David cries, *Cast me not off in mine old age.* Psa. lxxi. 9. Asaph, *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* Ps. lxxvii. 7. Peter, *Lord, is it I?* Matt. xxvi. 22. And Paul, *Lest I should be a cast away.* 1 Cor. xi. 27.

But believers, remember, there may be true grace where there is no comfort.

Believe firmly, hope joyfully, love fervently, pray earnestly, walk humbly, work diligently, and wait quietly; and all this will be graciously considered.

Hold up, hold on, hold out, hold fast that which you have received; still watch, still pray, still believe; *fight and run,* that you may obtain; 'tis but a little

while, and he that comes will come and will not tarry; 'tis but a little while, and your warfare is accomplished, and your iniquities shall be everlastingly separated from you: your sin and sorrows, tears and fears, fled and gone, gone for ever; and you meet with an unspeakable reward.

Of Sinners.

Are not they miserable, who, if they had their wish, could not be happy.

They that will not hear Christ say, *Come to me*, in a day of grace, shall hear him say, *Depart from me*, in a day of judgment.

If we are graceless here, we shall be speechless hereafter.

Sinners are first driven, then drawn to God.

The conversion of a sinner is a greater wonder than the creation of the world.

If a sinner's thoughts be not changed by grace, they will be changed hereafter by experience.

They that are least serious have the greatest reason to be so; their condition is awful, and therefore their disposition ought to be so.

Hatred is due to sin, compassion to the sinner.

Sinners, if you will not hear God call to-day, you will harden your hearts to-day: and if you harden them to-day, God may harden them to-morrow. If you will not set about repentance to-day, God may justly deny you his assistance to-morrow.

If you will not do that which God hath enabled you to do, how can you look that he should do that for you which, of yourselves, you cannot do?

Don't think to begin to live when thou art ready to die.

If you would not go to hell, you must know that you *have* deserved it.

Let not your hearts flatter you, nor the world comfort *you, when* God threatens you.

God tells you, if you repent, you shall find mercy; and will you not believe him? Because thou hast been a sinner, wilt thou make God a liar?

Sinners, you must be changed; if your hearts be not changed for the better, your condition will be changed for the worse.

The worst of the ways of God, are better than the best of the ways of sin.

Of Sin.

He that pleads for sin is an advocate for his accuser.

God allows us any thing but sin.

If sin be in the fashion we must be out of it.

Then a man shews himself to be a christian, when he chooses rather to suffer than sin.

Sin digs graves for bodies, and kindles hell for souls.

That is a sufficient cause for trouble, that is the cause of all the trouble in the world.

Should not we groan for that which makes the whole creation groan?

If the heart be under the power of sin, the conscience is under the guilt of sin. If thou art not purified, thou art not pardoned.

A man can never leave sin thoroughly, till he loathes it heartily.

We must be sick of sin, before we be dead to sin.

There is no sin a man can be tempted to, but he will find greater comfort in resisting than indulging.

How can we say that we love Christ, if we love sin, which was an enemy to his life and soul when he was on earth, and is an enemy to his glory now that he is in heaven?

Our sins cried as loud to heaven, as the Jews did to earth, that Christ might be crucified.

Go to Golgotha, and see what sin did there.

Christ did not die for sin that we might live to sin.

Christ died that our sins might die, and our souls live.

All our sins shall not separate between God and our

souls, if unbelief doth not separate between Christ and our souls.

There is no sin but what may be traced up to unbelief.

He that glories in his sin, glories in his shame.

We should be ashamed of sin, but not ashamed to take shame for sin.

Get this principle in your hearts, *there is nothing got by sin, nor lost by holiness.*

By suffering we may avoid sinning, but by sinning we cannot avoid suffering.

One that truly fears God, is afraid of sin; he sees more evil in it than in all the evil in the world.

If we be not humble for sin, we derogate from the majesty of God; if we despair under it, we derogate from his mercy.

One that is sincere hates sin in himself, and laments it in others.

Our hatred of sin must be irreconcileable; and our endeavours against it perpetual.

Want of sorrow for sin, more argues want of love to Christ, than the sin itself.

Sin is a penitent's burthen and wound, but Christ is his cure and comfort.

Sin is the sickness of the soul, and Christ the only physician that can cure it of the leprosy of prophaneness, the fever of concupiscence, the dropsy of covetousness, the tympany of pride, the lethargy of lukewarmness, the phrenzy of passion, and the palsy of unbelief.

Hatred is heart-murder; lust is heart adultery; and covetousness heart-stealing.

How tender is our flesh? how hard our hearts? *i. e.* How much more sensible are we of suffering than sin!

We should fear to think that before God which we are afraid to do before man; for God knows our hearts better than any man knows our faces.

Vain thoughts are sin's advocates, and Christ's *adversaries.*

God is so holy, that he would not suffer such an evil

as sin, but that he is so wise, that he can bring good out of it.

Of Repentance.

Repentance begins in the humiliation of the heart, and ends in the reformation of the life.

Though we want power to repent; yet we do not want means to repent, nor power to use these means.

He that repents of sin, as sin, doth implicitly repent of all sin.

Let not sinful pleasures prevent godly sorrows.

An humble confession of sin brings shame to ourselves, but glory to God.

You cannot repent too soon. There is no day like to-day. Yesterday is gone, to-morrow is God's, not your own. And think how sad it will be to have your evidences to seek, when your cause is to be tried; to have your oil to buy, when you should have it to burn!

Let the hopes of mercy encourage to the exercise of repentance.

Turn to God, and he will turn to you; and then you are happy, though all the world turn against you.

If we think amiss of Christ, we shall never believe; if we think well of sin we shall never repent.

If we put off our repentance to another day, we have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in.

If we study to honour God, we cannot do it better than by confessing our sins, and laying ourselves low at the feet of Christ.

Godly sorrow is the sorrow of love, the melting of the heart; love is the pain and pleasure of a mourning heart.

The evangelical penitent loves and grieves. "Alas, "(saith he) that I, who am as high as heaven in privi- "lege, should be as deep as hell in iniquity! Instead "of repenting, I have ran farther on score! Instead of "honouring God, I have dishonoured him! Instead "*of pleasing* him, I have provoked him! Instead of

" following him, I have forsaken him!—O what bow-
" els have I grieved! How can I sin against my Jesus!
" Shall I deny and crucify my Saviour! He was cru-
" cified for me, and shall he be crucified by me! Shall
" I wound his heart and pierce his side again, and give
" him cause to say, These are the wounds I received
" in the house of my friends."

Of Faith.

Reliance is the essence of faith, Christ is the object, the word is the food, and obedience the proof: so that the true faith is a depending upon Christ for salvation in a way of obedience, as he is offered in the word.

The true tears of repentance flow from the eye of faith.

Though faith be necessary to our justification, good works are necessary to our salvation.

We must derive our works from faith, and demonstrate our faith by works.

God is often pleased to embitter a life of sense, that he may endear the life of faith.

A stedfast faith begets a constant peace.

The more faith the more humility.

Keep good principles, and they will keep you.

Men would first see, and then believe; but they must first believe, and then see.

As believers live upon Christ, by faith, so they live to him by obedience.

Justifying faith is always attended with universal obedience.

There is a difference between contending for the faith, and babbling for a fancy.

Assurances sets the notion of faith too high, assent too low.

There is as much difference between faith and assurance, as there is between the root and the fruit.

There may be joy without faith, and there may be *faith without* joy.

Human faith is founded upon probability, divine faith upon certainty.

If the exercise of faith be the care of your souls, the end of your faith will be the salvation of your souls.

Of Humility.

To be low is the safest and comliest posture for sinful creatures.

It is the creature's honour to abase himself before the most high God.

God had rather see his children humble for sin, than proud of grace.

If men did but know themselves more, they would be more humble.

They that are humble, are content and thankful.

An humble spirit is a charitable and quiet spirit.

Judge thyself with a judgment of sincerity, and thou wilt judge others with a judgment of charity.

To humble ourselves is the only way to rise.

Believers must be humble for sin pardoned, and because it is pardoned.

When Paul was a pharisee, he thought he was blameless: when he was a christian, the chief of sinners; before, any thing but Christ; now, none but Christ.

If Christ humbled himself to our nature, we should humble ourselves to honour his name.

Neither all the devils in hell, nor all the temptations of the world can hurt that man that keeps himself humble and depending on Christ.

It is no humiliation to aggravate sin above Christ's saving power.

Despair is a corruption of humiliation, it is a counterfeit humility, a sullen pride, a covert of a hardened spirit.

This is true humiliation, which (like a harbinger) makes way for Christ, and throws the soul at his feet.

Our Saviour was a preacher and pattern of humility;

he did so admire it, that he set them in the highest form, that had the lowest hearts.

None so high and glorious as Christ, yet none so meek and lowly.

Of Contentment.

Humility is the mother of contentment.

The deeper your self-abhorrence, the easier is self-resignation.

They that deserve nothing should be content with any thing.

Bless God for what you have, and trust God for what you want.

We must commit our souls to God's keeping, and submit ourselves to God's disposing.

We should obey his revealed will, and then be resigned to his providential will.

If we cannot bring our condition to our mind, we must labour to bring our mind to our condition.

Neither contentment or discontentment arises from the outward condition, but from the inward disposition.

If a man is not content in that state he is in, he will not be content in any state he would be in.

Of Pride.

To be sure a man is proud of that which he scorns another for the want of.

That which a man envies in another, he would be proud of, if he had it himself.

Pride is founded on error and self-ignorance.

Some are proud of what they are, others of what they are not.

There is a sullen pride in not acknowledging benefits.

A man may be poor in purse, yet proud in spirit.

There may be pride in rags, in a solemn look, and *lowly* carriage.

God had rather his people should fare poorly, than *re proudly.*

How canst thou be a judge of another's heart, that dost not know thine own?

As the first step heavenward is humility, so the first step hellward is pride.

Pride counts the gospel foolishness, but the gospel always shews pride to be so.

Pride is a sin that will rise out of the ashes of other sins.

Folly is the beginning of pride, and shame shall be the end of it; either temporal repentance or eternal punishment.

Shall the sinner be proud that is going to hell? shall the saint be proud that is newly saved from it?

Thou that canst call nothing thy own but sin and shame, art thou proud? A worm, and proud? Emptiness, and proud? Perishing, and proud?

It is unreasonable for the creature to be proud, much more the sinner.

Of Hypocrisy.

An hypocrite is one that neither is what he seems, nor seems what he is.

An hypocrite is the picture of a saint; but his paint shall be washed off, and he shall appear in his own colours.

God is in good earnest with us, we ought therefore to be so with him.

An hypocrite is hated of the world for seeming a christian, and hated of God for not being one.

Of Idleness.

Idleness is the mother of many wanton children.

They that do nothing, are in the ready way to do that which is worse than nothing.

If we hide our talent in the earth, we shall lose our treasure in heaven.

A christian should never say he hath nothing to do.

It was not for nothing that we were called out of nothing.

Of the Soul.

It matters not what a man loses, if he save his soul; but if he lose his soul, it matters not what he saves.

They that are least sensible of their souls' wants, are most miserable.

'Tis our greatest wisdom to be tenderly watchful over the frame of our spirits! to observe what helps it, and what injures it.

If you lose your time, you lose your hopes; and if you lose your hopes, you lose your souls; and when your souls are lost, they shall never be recovered; and when your time is lost, it shall never be redeemed.

Of the Heart and Conscience.

The soft mercies of God will break the hard heart of man.

An hard heart is not so soon broken, as a broken heart is bound up.

It is better to have a good conscience, and be censured, than to have a bad one and be flattered.

We must hear the warnings of conscience or we shall feel the woundings of conscience.

A word from God, a look from Christ, a touch from the spirit will break the heart.

Of Grace.

The notion of free-grace may make persons dissolute, but a sense of it restrains from sin.

The goodness of God respects our emptiness, the grace of God our sinfulness, and the mercy of God our unworthiness.

What sin is there, which grace cannot pardon? *What heart is there,* which grace cannot soften? *What soul is there,* which grace cannot save?

All grace flows from Christ united to the soul, as all life flows from the soul united to the body.

The more God's justice was declared towards his son, the more was his mercy magnified towards the sinner.

God humbled his son, to exalt his grace.

Saul was not so free in persecuting Christ, as Christ was in pardoning Paul.

Bless God for Christ, Christ for the spirit, and the spirit for grace.

Possibly a Christian's enemies may spoil him of his common mercies; but they shall never rob him of his covenant mercies.

God's faithfulness performed what his mercy promised.

Mercy drew the covenant; faithfulness keeps it; mercy called us; faithfulness will not cast us off.

Common mercies may be sweet, but covenant mercies are sure.

Abusers of mercy are treasurers up of wrath.

If thou wert worthy, thou couldst have no mercy.

There is grace in the desire of grace, as there is sin in the desire of sin.

You that have found mercy shew mercy.

Though God in mercy hath done great things for you, yet consider what in justice he might have done to you.

Whilst we carry a sense of grace in our conscience to comfort us, let us carry a sense of sin in our memory to humble us.

We can never bless God enough for his patience, that hath kept us so long out of hell; nor for his mercy that so earnestly invites us to heaven.

All that are chosen are vessels of mercy, all that are regenerate are patterns of mercy, all that are saved are monuments of mercy; and the work of heaven, is to sing the loud praises of mercy.

It melts the heart to think, that God is as full of mercy, as I am of sin; he as free to forgive as I am to offend; he hath daily mercies for daily sins.

The heart of man is such a barren soil, that no good *can grow therein*, unless Almighty grace plant it.

Grace is an immortal seed, cast into an immortal soil, that brings forth immortal fruit.

Of Temptation.

Temptations are instructions.

He is over-wise that goes out of God's way to escape a cross.

God will either keep his saints from temptations, by his preventing mercy, or in temptations by his supporting mercy, or find a way for their escape by his delivering mercy.

A Christian that lives here among his enemies, should never stir abroad without his guard.

Satan tempts to sin, the spirit counsels against sin.

If you follow Satan, you will find the tempter prove a tormentor; if you follow the spirit, you will find the counsellor prove a comforter.

Of the World.

If the world be our portion here, hell will be our portion hereafter.

We must neither leave the world, nor love it,

The world promises comforts, and pays sorrows.

Riches and prosperity will either kill with care, or surfeit with delight.

Be not proud of riches but afraid of them, lest they be as silver bars to cross the way to heaven.

We put a price upon riches, but riches cannot put a price upon us.

We must answer for our riches, but our riches cannot answer for us.

Riches are as indifferent things; good or bad, as they are used: be then as indifferent to them as they are to you.

If there be too great an affection for any thing here, *there will* be an answerable affection.

'Tis a sad thing when a man can have no comfort but *in diversions*, no joy but in forgetting himself.

Love the men of the world, but not the things of the world.

To have a portion in the world, is a mercy; to have the world for a portion, is a misery.

Whatever we make an idol of, will be a cross to us if we belong to Christ; a curse to us if we do not.

We should endeavour to pass through this world with a cheerful indifferency.

Covetousness betrayed our Saviour, envy accused him, and the friendship of the world condemned him.

Man is not made for the world, but the world for man.

It is our business in this world, to secure an interest in the next.

The things of the world, the more they are known, the less they are admired; but the things of God, the more they are known the more they are admired.

There is no miss of the creature, where there is a full enjoyment of the Creator.

If thou art not afraid of the world, I fear thou art a friend of the world, and an enemy to God.

As you love your souls, beware of the world; it hath slain its thousands, and ten thousands. What ruined Lot's wife? the world. What ruined Judas? the world. What ruined Simon Magus? the world. What ruined Demas? the world. And, what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? *Matt.* xvi. 26.

To speak the truth freely: riches are dust, honours are shadows, and pleasures are bubbles, and a man a lump of vanity, compounded of sin and misery.

Of the Word of God.

The word of God must be nearer to us than our friends dearer to us than our liberty, and pleasanter to us than all earthly comforts.

Take the candle of God's word, and search the corners of your heart.

We speak to God in prayer; God speaks to us in his *word.*

Two things are to be trembled at; the presence of God which fills all places, and the word of God which reacheth to all times.

All arguments against the word of God are fallacies; all the conceits against the word are delusions; all derision against the word is folly; and all opposition against the word is madness.

When God threatens, that's a time to repent: when he promises, that's a time to believe; when he commands, that's a time to obey.

If a man believed the threatenings of the word of God, he would tremble, and fly to the promise for refuge.

As Christ came out of his Father's bosom, so the promises came out of Christ's side.

The church cannot live without faith, and faith cannot live without the promises.

We have less power to stand than our first parents, but we have better promises.

Whatever promises faith takes hold of, it makes the good thing there promised to be our own.

God's promises are a defence against man's threatenings.

The promises of the gospel are sealed to us by the oath of the Father, the blood of the Son, and the witness of the Spirit.

Of the Law.

The moral law was weak through the flesh; the ceremonial law was so in its own nature; but Christ was the end of the moral to fulfil it, and the end of the ceremonial law to answer its intention by offering himself a sacrifice.

Christ was God's righteous servant to perform all the duties of the moral law; and our devoted sacrifice to bear all the penalties of it.

By the law is the knowledge of sin, by the gospel is *the knowledge* of Christ.

God hath written a law and a gospel; the law to hum-

Notional knowledge is like the light of a candle, which enlightens, but does not warm; true and saving knowledge is like the sun, which not only enlightens but enlivens.

As God commanded under the law, that the inwards of every sacrifice should be burnt, that they might be an offering made by fire, of sweet savour, unto the Lord, *Levit.* iv. 8. so he looks for no less now: for, unless we offer up our hearts to him on the altar of Christ's merits, with the fire of zeal, our duties will never be acceptable to him.

As Old Testament saints had sacrifices under the law, so New Testament saints have under the gospel: for every duty in which saints consecrate themselves, is called sacrifice, *Psa.* iv. 5. cxvi. 17. *Heb.* xiii. 16. And we may parallel law and gospel sacrifices thus. Repentance is a trespass-offering, zeal a burnt-offering, praise a freewill-offering, and sincerity the oblations of unleavened bread.

A christian's birth is like the Red sea, that brings him into the wilderness; his death is like Jordan, that brings him into Canaan.

As the waters that sunk the men of the old world, raised up Noah in the ark; so death, which sinks sinners into hell, raises saints up to heaven.

As lamps fed with sweet oil, cast a sweeter smell when they are put out; so after death, the memory of the righteous is precious.

A wicked man is like one that hangs over a deep pit by a slender cord with one hand, and is cutting it with the other.

CHAPTER III.

Containing serious advice to youth.

PART I.

1. CHOOSE God for your portion; remember that he is the only happiness of a rational and immortal soul. The soul that was made for God can find no happiness but in God: it came from God, and can never be happy but by returning to him again, and resting in him. *Mic.* ii, 10. *Arise, for this is not your rest.* Col. iii. 1, 2, 3. *If ye be then risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

God is all-sufficient; get him for your portion and you have all; then you have infinite wisdom to direct you, infinite knowledge to teach you, infinite mercy to pity and save you, infinite love to care for and comfort you, and infinite power to protect and keep you. If God be yours, all his attributes are yours; all his creatures, all his works of Providence, shall do you good, as you have need of them. He is an eternal, full, satisfactory portion. He is an ever-living, ever-loving, ever-present friend; and without him you are a cursed creature in every condition, and all things will work against you.

2. Consider, that by nature you are dead in trespasses and sin; a child of wrath, a stranger and enemy to God; and while such, the thoughts of God are terrible to you: you can expect nothing from him but wrath and everlasting burnings. God is ever angry with the wicked: his holiness hates all sin; his all-seeing eye beholds it, and his justice will punish it.

While you are in a state of nature you can do nothing but sin, *Gen.* vi. 6. *Matt.* vii. 18. Every thing is a snare, and a wicked heart is apt to be taken. Labour to be sensible of this, and let the sinfulness of your nature be your greatest burden. Strive and labour against this principally. Get purity of heart, and a holy life will follow upon it; but if you strive only against outward acts of sin, while your heart is let alone, your labour will be in vain, your heart will tire you out; or if it doth not, yet remember, that God's eye is in the heart, and he hath provided a hell for hypocrites. Nothing more damnable than a wicked unrenewed heart.

3. Consider, that Christ alone is your way to God. Justification, pardon, and acceptance with God, is by faith in him alone. Sanctification, and a new nature, is by the power of his spirit alone. Let Christ therefore be precious to your souls. Labour for true faith in him. Take him for your Lord and Saviour; submit to his commands in all things; and rest your soul upon him alone for reconciliation and peace with God. Open your heart to the motions of his spirit; welcome that principle of a holy and divine life, and be sure to improve his motions, follow his drawings, and by no means grieve him.

4. Be speedy in your repentance, and diligent in your endeavours after holiness. Know the time of God's gracious visitation. While God is calling, Christ inviting, the gate of heaven set open, the ministers of the word exhorting, and the spirit drawing, make haste and delay not.

Consider your life is but short, and altogether uncertain. To defer one day may be to your everlasting undoing. When your life is once gone it will be in vain to think of repenting. You shall then have no more sermons, no more offers of Christ and grace, *Heb.* ix. 27. God will be patient no more. And if God should take away your life to-morrow, you would perish inexcusably for refusing his grace to-day. One offer of grace *refused renders* a sinner inexcusable, though God should

never offer his mercy more. O, trifle not with your soul! Be not careless of eternal happiness. You have heaven and hell, life and death before you, and it depends upon your own hearty choice which shall be your portion: and they are chosen by the choice of the way which leads to them. Chuse life, and chuse it speedily. And remember once again, that you have but one life to chuse in. Trifle not away this moment, upon which depends eternity: mispend not your short time to your eternal loss.

Stand not upon a short labour, difficulty, self-denial, or suffering, for your eternal happiness. God would have you saved: Christ hath died for you to reconcile you to God: he is ascended into heaven to open a door for your soul to enter in at, and he is interceding with the Father for all grace and mercy for you, if you refuse him not. He came into the world to *seek and to save that which is lost*, Luke xxi. 10. Be sensible of your sinful, lost, damnable condition without him. O! make haste to your Saviour, yield to all his demands, and take him as offered in the gospel, in all his offices.

5. Endeavour to be truly and thoroughly religious, and be not discouraged at the difficulties of it, God's grace shall be sufficient for your help; his promises shall be your sweet encouragement: peace of conscience, and communion with God, shall be your ever-present cordials. The trouble and pains of religion shall be but short, and your reward shall be glorious and eternal. Remember that of the apostle, when religion calls you to self-denial and sufferings, "Our light afflictions "that are but for a moment, shall work out for us a far "more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. "iv. 17. If we suffer with Christ we shall also reign "with him, 2 Tim. ii. 12. And the sufferings of this "present life are not worthy to be compared with the "glory which shall be revealed," Rom. viii. 18. See *also, Isa.* xliii. 2, 3, "When thou passeth through the "*waters, I* will be with thee; and through the rivers, "*they shall* not overflow thee; when thou walkest

"through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall "the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy "God, the holy one of Israel thy Saviour." Never are we more joyful than when we deny our joy for Christ's sake! And if these arguments will not prevail, then consider, that all the pains and difficulties of religion will be found in the end far more tolerable than hell.

6. Devote your young years to a good God, and your loving Saviour. The first fruits are to be offered to him. The green ears of youth are to be carried to his sanctuary. Think it not pity that the vain delights and sinful pleasures of youth should be lost; you shall but exchange them for spiritual delights, which are far more excellent, inward, and lasting. The joy of the Holy Ghost, the rejoicing of a good conscience, communion with God, the sense of his love, and the hope of heaven, are far better than the pleasures of sin, and will more than recompense your loss of youthful and carnal delights. And consider this seriously, that none have usually more comfort in their souls than those, who are willing to lose their sinful comforts for God and their soul's sake.

Remember that you must give an account to God how you spend your youth, as well as for old age. Consider, as young as you are, how many years are already spent; and what account you are able to give to God of them. One day spent in sin is too much; and the sins of one hour deserve a hell. Younger than you are dead and gone. Let the thoughts of them mind you seriously of your account. Your call to God's bar may be next. Are you ready? Think often what expense of time may be best accounted for to God; and to spend your younger days, as you will wish you had spent them when you come to die and be judged.

Suppose God should call you away suddenly, what sentence could you expect from him? Are you ready if the bridegroom should now come? *Matt.* xxv. 6. *It will be no* excuse at judgment, if you be found in *your sins, to say, Lord I was but young.* He that is

old enough to sin, is old enough for hell. You cannot make sure of God's love, and an interest in Christ too soon. You cannot secure your soul too soon.

Consider those young ones in scripture who are commended for their early piety. Samuel was ministering to God in his childhood, 1 *Sam.* ii. 18. Josiah had a tender heart for God in his tender years, 2 *Kings*, xxii. 19. Children sang hosannas to Christ, *Matt.* xxi. 15. Timothy was a saint betimes, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. And let these young ones be your pattern.

The young disciple was the loved disciple. God takes great delight in an early convert. All your life is due to God, let him therefore have all that still remains, and beg his pardon that any of it hath been denied him.

Repentance is easiest in youth. Sin is less rooted, Satan not so fortified, grace not so much slighted, the spirit not so much grieved, and the conscience not so much hardened.

Be sure therefore to give God your youth. Resolve now to be seriously religious. Now beg for the pardon of your sins, and the spirit of holiness; and though the generality of youth take another course, yet be not swayed by the multitude, and carried down the stream towards hell; let them go, you shall have better company. The saints of God will love you, the angels of God will guard you, and the presence of God himself shall be with you.

And if you find yourself still inclined to be as the most are, and to do as the most do, consider that you cannot have that pleasure in sin which others may. You have had a good education, and good instruction; your conscience hath been more awakened, and will not suffer you to enjoy the pleasures of sin, as others, who are more ignorant, and worse educated, may. Conscience will mix gall with your honey; when you go to prayer, *in the evening*, upon your bed, when alone and retired, *or in the dark*, it will read sad lectures to you, and make *you review* your past delights with bitterness.

Labour therefore to approve yourself to God, in youth; and though others may condemn you, yet God (from whose mouth only you must live or die) will acquit and justify you.

And as a conclusion of this advice, let me persuade you to consider, that a forsaking of sin, when you are most capable of pleasure or honour by it, and a turning to God when you are most capable of enjoying the world will clearly evidence the truth of your conversion. So that a timely conversion to God in youth, as it is most easy, so it is less questionable; for it now appears that God is loved for himself, and Christ preferred above the flesh, and grace above the sweetest delights in the world.

PART II.

1. Make the word of God the rule of all you do.

2. Whatever you do, be sure to do it in the strength of Christ. *Without me* (saith Christ) *ye can do nothing*, John xv. 5. i. e. nothing well, nothing that is acceptable to God. If you do not bear fruit as a branch in Christ, your fruit will be but bad, and unsavoury in God's account; and you cannot bear fruit as a branch in Christ, unless all your sap and fructifying power be drawn from him by an active faith. Paul could do *all things through Christ that strengthened him*, Phil. vi. 13. He could bear the devil's buffetings by sufficient grace from Christ, 2 Cor. xii. 19. But of himself he could not so much as think a good thought, 2 Cor. iii. 5.

Nature is but a dry root of goodness; no gracious actions spring from thence. Grace depends upon continual supplies that flow from Christ, as sap from the root, or beams from the sun. If Christ withdraws, your grace presently languishes, grows faint and inactive. *Know* therefore, and mind it before you go to *work, from* whence your strength must come, and fetch

it in by faith. Without this practice you shall fall in small temptations, and with it stand in great ones. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and nothing shall be too hard for you. Mountains shall be plains, and vallies filled up. All things shall be possible to him that believes, and relies upon that power to which nothing is impossible.

3. As you are to act in the power of Christ, so you are to present your duties to God in the name of Christ, *Col.* iii. 17. Your most costly sacrifices are but unsavoury in the nostrils of a holy God, if they be not perfumed by the fragrant incense of his intercession; your fairest righteousness but as filthy rags, if his righteousness doth not cover it; your duties must be dyed in the blood of Christ, they must be enriched with his precious merits, or they will be too mean for God to look upon, unless with indignation. *In the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, Isa. xiv. 24.

4. Whatever you do, *do all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. x. 31. Duty that does not begin and end with God, is no part of goodness. Look therefore to your end, and never satisfy yourself that you have done much, unless that you have done it well.

It is the design of the gospel to take man wholly off himself, and cast him wholly upon God and Christ. All idols must be cast down, that God alone may be exalted. Self-emptiness and God's fulness, self-deficiency and Christ's sufficiency, self-unrighteousness and Christ's righteousness, are the great convictions of the gospel; and to make self nothing, and God all in point of wisdom, strength, righteousness, and glory, is the great command and duty of it.

And by these things examine all you do; by whose rule have I acted? By whose strength have I acted? In whose name have I acted? And for whose glory have I acted? What faith, what humility, what self-*denial*, what love of God and Christ, hath there been in *all my* actions?

These are general rules of action.

5. Endeavour to make every day the Lord's, to spend it well, and to get nearer heaven by it.

And to this end accept kindly of this advice.

1. As soon as ever you awake in the morning, lift up your heart to God, and open it to him. As much as possible you can, avoid all thoughts about the world until your morning devotions are over. For you will find by experience, that if the world gives your soul the first salute, and be embraced with kindness in your morning affections, it will greatly deaden your heart in the morning duties.

2. As soon as you are up, present your desires to God, in the name of Christ, for whatever your soul feels the want of, and give God his due praises for his mercies towards you the night past. Thus David, Psa. v. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee.* And for thansgiving, Psa. xcii. 1, 2. *It is a good thing to give thanks unto thee, O Lord—to shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning.*

3. Let no day go without reading some portion of the scriptures; and it is no great matter, whether you read it before you pray in the morning, or just after; your inclination and experience will direct you; but be sure it be done. You will find it very profitable to begin the day with such a converse with God. Prov. xxii. 23. *When thou wakest it shall talk with thee.* See *John* v. 39. the command of Christ; and *Joshua* i. 8. the command of God, with a promise.

The scripture discovers sin, and the devil's devices and malice; it discovers duty, and the love of God and Christ; and it discovers your strength and encouragement; there are the promises of assisting and crowning grace. By these, the spirit acts, the devil is *conquered*, and the soul is comforted. Through these *the eye of faith* can see the love of Christ, the grace of

God, and the glory of heaven. In these are the food, the physic, and the arms of the christian's soul. These are the words of reconciliation, grace, and truth, and the power of God to salvation; therefore, every day look into these, praying for the Spirit's teachings, and mixing faith with what you read.

4. Let all your ordinary or worldly business of the day be done with integrity of heart, and a respect to God, whose servant you ought be in all things. Psa. lxxviii. 72. Do all things as to the Lord, as in his eye, and according to his will; and your whole day's work will be as it were a religious worship; this respect will make all holy.

5. Have a care every day that nothing put you into a passion: do nothing with an over eagerness of mind; and be ever upon your guard against sudden accidents. And this can never be obtained but by committing yourself and your affairs, into God's hand and care every day; believing that he governs all things wisely, and will ever do that which is best for you.

The power, wisdom, and goodness of divine providence, must every day be believed by him that would live every day in peace and tranquillity of soul.

6. Every evening to your prayers again, and to your praises for that day's mercies. The Jews were appointed their evening sacrifices, as well as morning. *Exod.* xxx. 7, 8. Twice a-day is as little as can be allowed to those who are commanded to pray continually. *Phil.* iv. 6. *Thes.* v. 17. And every prayer should have its praises in it, Psa. xcii. 1, 2. *It is good to give thanks unto the Lord—to shew forth his faithfulness every night.* A child will ask his earthly father's blessing at morning and night; and it is better manners, and to better purpose, to ask our heavenly father's blessing as often. We are ever in want, and God is ever giving; prayers therefore, and praises, are ever suitable and becoming.

Let no day go without observation, and review of *God's carriage* towards you, and yours towards him;

of mercies and afflictions; and of your duties, and the frame of heart in them; of your sins or inclinations to sin; and so likewise of any special or remarkable providence of God related to you by others, or seen or heard of by yourself. And let God have the glory of what is good. In afflictions be humble, be ashamed and grieved for sins; and consider what God's special providences speak to you.

CHAPTER VI.

Containing some occasional reflections, directions, means and signs of grace, &c.

Proper reflections for poor saints.

OUTWARD good things are no sign of God's special love. The sun of prosperity shines upon the brambles of the wilderness, as well as upon the flowers of the garden: and the snow of affliction falls upon the garden as well as upon the wilderness.

What though the streams of creature comforts run low with thee, so thou hast the more from the spring-head? There is more comfort in one drop that distils immediately from God, than from ten thousand rivers that flow from creature delights.

God doth sometimes on purpose shew us the creature's emptiness, that we may go to his full cisterns, that we may know him to be the fountain: and that we may feed more largely upon spiritual dainties, he does deny us carnal ones.

What though God deny thee the earthly jewel, if he gives thee the heavenly crown?—if thou hast no portion *here, thou* shalt have a kingdom hereafter; and *God is thy* portion here, and so long thou shalt not

want any good thing. Creature comforts at the best, and to the best, are only delightful, not satisfying: pleasant, not gainful!

What if all thy friends forsake thee, so long as God (who is better than all) stand by thee?—Whatever enjoyment friends afford, that God does much more. Do they love thee? He died for thee. Do they pity thee in affliction? In all thy affliction he is afflicted. *Isa.* lxiii. 9. What wouldst thou have a friend for? For converse; O taste and see how good and pleasant a thing it is to have communion with God! Hear (if thou canst, and not be ravished) the sweet voice, I am thine and thou art mine. O! feel the pantings of his heart, and hear the soundings of his bowels!—Wouldst thou have a friend to pour out thy breast into?—O! who is so fit for that as God? He will bear part of thy burden if thou art laden, or he will add new strength to sustain it—His love, his converse, his society, is life itself; and such a life is made up of nothing but sweetness and delight.

The mystery of a christian.

1. He liveth in another, *Gal.* ii. 20. He is wise in another, 1. *Cor.* i. 30. He is righteous in another, *Rom.* x. 4. He is strong in another, *Isa.* xlv. 24.

2. He is very low in humility, but very high in hope. He knows he is undeserving of the least mercy, yet expects the greatest, *Gen.* xxxii. 10, 12.

3. He is in the world, but not of the world, *John* xv. 6. In the world as a pilgrim, but not as a citizen. His habitation is below, but his conversation above.

4 He is meek, but vehement; meek in his own cause, yet vehement in the cause of God. (As Moses, who was dead to affronts, deaf to reproaches, and blind to injuries.) He will comply with any thing that is civil, but with nothing that is sinful. He will stoop to the necessities of the meanest, but will not yield to the sinful humours of the greatest.

5. He works out his salvation with fear and trembling, yet believes in Christ without fear and trembling, *Phil.* ii, 13. He does much for God, yet counts himself an unprofitable servant. He works as if he was to live here always, yet worships as if he was to die to-morrow

6. When he is weak then is he strong, 2 *Cor.* xii. 10. When he is most sensible of his own weakness, and most dependant on Christ's strength, then he stands the safest.

7. When he is most vile in his own eyes he is most glorious in the eyes of God. When Job abhorred himself then God raised him. *Job* xlii. 6. When the centurion thought himself the most unworthy, Christ said, *I have not found so great faith, no not in* Israel, *Matth.* viii. 8, 10.

8. He is content with his condition, yet longs and prays for a better, 2. *Cor.* v. 14.

9. His losses are gains; (as Job's, *Job* xlii. 12.) his afflictions are promotions, (as Jacob's, *All those things are against me*, saith he, *Gen* xlii. 36. yet all those things were for him.) His disappointments are preferments; (as Moses's, though he did not go to Canaan, as he desired, yet he went to heaven, which was better,) *Deut.* xxxiv. 4, 5.

10. He grieves, yet he rejoices under the strokes of his heavenly father's hands. He grieves that his father's hand strikes him, yet rejoices that it is the hand of a father, *Heb.* xii. 6, 7.

11. He knows there is no absolute perfection in this life, yet is continually reaching after it, *Phil.* iii. 12, 13, 14.

12. The less his burden grows the more he feels it. The less sin he hath the more sensible he is of sin; not that sin grows, but light, holiness, and tenderness are increased, 1 *Tim.* i. 14.

13. He is content to live, yet willing to die. He desires to serve Christ here, yet desires more to depart, and *to be with him in* heaven. *Phil.* 1. 23.

Some doubts and fears of a tender conscience answered.

1. I fear Christ is not willing to save me.

Ans. What is this but limiting, or setting bounds to infinite mercy?—What greater signs of his willingness would you have than those he hath already given you? He hath died and purchased salvation for you. *Heb.* ii. 9. 1 *John* ii. 2. He calls and entreats you to come and accept of it. *Matt.* xi. 28. He saith he will not cast you out. *John* vi. 37. He complains that you will not come. *John* v. 40.—And wilt thou yet say, He is not willing?—*If thou art willing, he never was otherwise.—Be of good comfort, he calleth thee.* Isa. lv. 1.—Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price—Bring only yourself, come out of need, as all do; as the prodigal did.

2. But I am so unworthy—

Ans. If you would have nothing but what you are worthy of, you must have nothing but hell. What was Abraham or Saul, or any worthy of, before the Lord called them? Say not, I am unworthy. Art thou willing? *Rev.* xxii. 17. *Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely.*

3. But my sins are very great, and I am confounded at the sight of them. Alas! how can I think of a pardon?

Ans. Are thy sins great? the more need thou hast of a Saviour. Greater sinners have been pardoned, Manasseh and Saul. But dost thou think thou art more guilty than Christ is gracious? Read *Isa.* 1. 18. "Come and let us reason together, saith the Lord, "though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white "as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall "be as wool." 1. *John* i. 7. "The blood of Jesus "Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin." Bless God for that word *all.*

4. *But I* have a proud heart, a dead heart.

Ans. Put that among your sins, and come to Christ.

5. My sins are many as well as great. I sin daily; I so sin that I must suffer.

Ans. Yea, if there were none to appear for thee. *Luke* vii. 47. "Her sins which were many are forgiven "her." 1 *John* i. 7. "Christ is a daily advocate." 1 *John* ii. 1, 2. "If any man sin we have an advocate "with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is "the propitation for our sins." This scripture should be as daily bread for believers to live upon.

6. I have sinned against light and conviction.

Ans. So did David and Peter, who yet were pardoned.

7. But I am a revolter and backslider.

Ans. Jer. iii. 1.—"Thou hast played the harlot with "many lovers, yet return again unto me saith the Lord." *Hos.* xiv. 4. "I will heal their backslidings, I will love "them freely."

8. I am afraid of departing from God again; I have no strength.

Ans. Isa. xlv. 24. "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

9. I am afraid to die.

Ans. Psal. xxiii. 4. "Yea, though I walk through the "valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for "thou art with me." Phil. i. 23. "I am in a strait "between two, having a desire to depart and be with "Christ, which is far better."—When you die God shall be with you; and Christ shall be with you; and you shall be with God and Christ for ever.

Directions for those that are under conviction of conscience.

1. Don't presume, you are not yet come to the heavenly Canaan.

2. Don't Despair, you are in the way to it.

3. Beware of ill company.

4. *Fear falling* away, *Heb.* iv. 1. Preserve a tender *frame.*

5. Keep up prayer. Be much in ejaculations.
6. Don't rest in convictions, nor duties, nor any thing short of Christ.
7. Be much in humiliation and confession.
8. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.
9. Study your soul's case, and labour to get your hearts affected with it, and mortified to the world.
10. Remember the great day of accounts, *Eccl.* xii. 14.
11. Prepare for, and think not strange of trials, *Heb.* x. 32.
12. Let not religion be your diversion, but your business.

Directions to keep from sin.

1. Run not into temptation.
2. Maintain a constant watch against, and fear of sin.
3. Beware of pride and presumption.
4. Avoid and abhor slothfulness.
5. Remember you stand by faith: your strength is in Christ, look to him for it.

Means to gain repentance.

1. Sit with care, constancy, and conscience under the word of truth and gospel of grace.
2. Study the nature of God.
3. Sit loose to the world.
4. Consider the shortness of life, and the limitation of the day of grace.
5. Be much in the business of self-examination. *Psalm* iv. 4. "Stand in awe and sin not, commune with your "own heart upon your bed, and be still." *Lam.* iii. 40. "Let us search and try our hearts, and turn again unto "the Lord."
6. *Seriously* expect approaching judgment.
7. *Think* much of death and eternity.
8. *Wash* thy heart in the blood of Jesus, and take *ry day* a turn on Mount Calvary.

9. Seriously apprehend the possibility, nay, the probability, nay, the absolute certainty, of a pardon through Christ.

10. Sue for repentance at the hand of God: say with Ephraim, *turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God*, Jer. xxxi. 18.

Means to live at peace.

1. Mind your own business, 1 *Thess.* iv. 11.
2. Keep your tongue from evil, *Pet.* iii. 10.
3. Don't contend for every trifle, whether it be a matter of right or opinion.
4. If others neglect their duties to you, be sure that you perform yours to them. To render railing for railing, is to return sin for sin.
5. Make your enemy see and feel your love to him, *Rom.* xii. 20.
6. Beg of God for universal charity.
7. Be humble.
8. By faith wait for the providence of God.

Means to be content.

1. Consider you have what God allots you; what his providence allows you. Your crosses and comforts are mixed by his hands. It is the will of God that thou shouldst be thus and thus. Labour then to have that dearer to thee than any thing in the world.

2. Consider, that if you had fewer comforts and more crosses, you ought to be thankful; for do you know what you have deserved. 'Tis of the Lord's mercy that you are not consumed.

3. Whatever comes, take it as from the hand of God. Assure yourself, that without his permission and direction it could not come.

4. Prepare to receive the will of God, and look for *changes and alterations* in the world.

5. *Faith is* another means to quiet, satisfy, and con-

tent the mind. That assures us, that that which is consistent with the love of God may well be borne. Outward losses and afflictions are consistent with the love of God, *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Heb.* xii. 6. We are all subject to alterations; our life, health, estate, friends, families, and all we have, are liable to changes. Let us then fix upon a God that never changes, that never fails, who is from everlasting to everlasting. Let us depend upon a God that depends upon none. And, what though our house be not so with God as it hath been; yet if he hath made with us an everlasting covenant, we have great reason to be content with all his outward dealings with us. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5.

Means to preserve mercies.

1. Be thankful for them.
2. Receive them as mercies, not as dues.
3. Prepare to part with them.
4. Expect the continuance of mercies from God: he is the strength of our life, the staff of our bread, the breath of our nostrils, and the length of our days.

Signs of sincerity.

1. Prayer is a sign of sincerity, if it be secret, *Matt.* vi. 6. Frequent, *Acts.* x. 2. Fervent, *Rom.* viii. 26.

2. A willingness to be searched by God, *Psa.* cxxxix. 23. By the righteous, *Psa.* cxii. 5. By ministers, *Acts.* x. 33. By conscience, *Psa.* lxxvii. 6. By the scriptures, *John* iii. 19, 20, 21. Sincere souls love sincere dealings.

3. A sense of sin; particularly of spiritual sins, *Mark* ix. 24. *Rom.* vii. 21. And of original sin, *Rom.* vii. 24. especially when it drives to Christ, *ver.* 25.

4. *When* a man is most sensible of, and watchful *against his* own sin, his constitutional sin, the beam in *his own eye.*

5. Universal tenderness. When a man will not plead for any sin, *Psa.* cxix. 128. nor quarrel with any of the commandments, *Psa.* cxix. 6. *Acts* ix. 6.

6. It is a sign of sincerity when a man chuses afflictions rather than sin, *Daniel*, iii. 17, 18.

7. When a man relies upon Christ for strength against sin.

8. When a man loves God above all, and loves others principally for what is God-like in them.

9. When a man delights in the word of God.

10. When he makes conscience to watch his heart in duty.

11. When a man's thoughts run freely on heavenly things.

12. When the glory of God is preferred above all.

13. When a man's profession is joined with meekness.

14. A well-governed tongue (for an outward sign) when a man dares neither boast of himself, nor censure others, *James* iii. 2. *Matt.* xii. 36.

15. Constancy in the ways of God, *Job.* xxvii. 6. 10. Such a man is not a hypocrite.

Short questions whereby to know whether the heart be truly changed,

1. Hath thine heart been turned into sorrow for sin?

2. Hath thy sorrow turned into prayer?

3. Hath thy prayer turned into faith?

4. Hath thy faith issued in universal tenderness and obedience?

Signs of faith.

To those that believe,

1. Christ is precious.

2. The word is sweet.

3. *Sin is* bitter.

4. Prayer is delightful.
5. Saints are dear.
6. Religion is their business.
7. The world is a broken idol.
8. Death is welcome ;—or thus :

They that believe,

Have Christ in their heart; heaven in their eye; and the world under their feet; God's spirit is their guide ; God's fear is their guard ; God's people are their companions ; God's promises are their cordials ; holiness is their way, and heaven is their home.

Signs of love to Christ.

They that love Christ,

1. Love to think of him.
2. They love to hear of him.
3. They love to read of him.
4. They love to speak { of / for / to } him.
5. They love the presence of Christ.
6. They love the yoke of Christ.
7. They love the ministers of Christ.
8. They love the name of Christ.
9. They hate sin.
10. They are pleased when Christ is pleased.
11. They are grieved when Christ is grieved.
12. They long to be with Christ.

Christ's will is their will ; Christ's dishonour is their affliction ; Christ's cause is their care ; Christ's ministers are their stars ; Christ's saints are their companions ; Christ's day is their delight ; Christ's word is *their oracle* ; Christ's glory is their end.

Signs of the fear of God.

A man then fears God,

1. When he dares not sin, though solicited and tempted to it.
2. When sin is common and yet he fears it.
3. When he is afraid of an evil thought.
4. When he dares not sin, though he should suffer if he does not.
5. When his heart is broken, and trembles at the word of God.
6. When he flies to Christ.
7. When he is studious to please God.

Signs of true grace.

1. When self-loving is turned into self-loathing; self-excusing into self-condemning; self-admiring into self-abhorring; self-seeking into self-denying.
2. It is a sign of true grace when a man seriously complains of the want of grace.

A graceless person cannot truly complain that he hath no grace. There is grace in that complaint.

3. When the heart is tender, and feels the power of an ordinance.
4. When the soul hath an appetite after the word, 1 *Pet.* ii. 2.
5. When a man makes a conscience of secret prayer.
6. When we are taken with their conversation, and manner of life, who are most spiritual, *Zech.* viii. 23.
7. When we are willing to be acquainted with Christ.
8. When a man approves of all duties.
9. When he desires more grace: there is grace in the desire of grace, as there is sin in the desire of sin, *Neh.* i. 11. *Psalm* lxxxiv. 5.

CHAPTER V.

Containing some Letters of the late Reverend Mr. JOHN MASON, *which he sent to several of his friends; tending to promote the power of godliness, both in persons and families.*

LETTER I.

To my dear sister, Mrs. HANNAH WYAT, *under illness.*

DEAR SISTER,

I beseech his most merciful Majesty to send his word and heal you! That we may not have sorrow upon sorrow!—O, if it were his will to restore you for his glory, and the good of many!—And who can tell, but by this affliction he is fitting you for future service? And that the prayers of your many affectionate and faithful friends may be a means of your recovery? Which I hope, through the thanksgiving of many, will redound to the praise and glory of God:—But I believe, it is not recovery you wish for, any farther than as it will be a manifestation of God's pleasure, and an opportunity of serving him; it is not that you so much desire, as to depart and to be with Christ, which is indeed far better.

My dear sister, What thanks can we render unto God who hath visited us with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, through our Redeemer? and hath given us that communion with him here, which is a pledge of our joint communion with him in everlasting glory? Certainly you cannot but remember some Bethels and Chebars, *where the* Lord hath met you and owned you; some promises which have been made your own; and some

times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord: Blessed be God that you have a witness in yourself; an eternal evidence, an inward sight and taste that the Lord is gracious.

The Lord hath acquainted you with that which is the very sum and substance of the gospel, viz. That Christ came into the world to save sinners: That a Christian's thankfulness flows from faith in the promises: that self-denial must run through the whole course of this life, as the warp through the woof: and that Christ is a Christian's life, peace, hope and security: whilst he lives we are in safety:

Whilst God is merciful and true,
We are both safe and happy too:

That a Christian's important and daily duty is to eye and engage his continual assistance: and that our recovery from daily infirmities must be by a daily recourse to this ever-living, ever-loving, ever-pleading Advocate.

You know also, that submission to the will of God, is a yielding to those methods, whereby he is conducting us to eternal happiness and glory; and that every dram of affliction is ordered us by the love of our ever-gracious and all-merciful Father. Bow then to his sovereignty, and believe his grace: all the paths of God are mercy and truth to you.—Infinite and immortal thanks are due to our ever-blessed Father, Redeemer, and Comforter. The Lord be with your spirit!—Grace and peace be with you, *Amen.*—I remain,

Your affectionate and
most obliged brother in the Lord,
JOHN MASON.

LETTER II.

To my dear friend, Mrs. MARY HOLMES.

DEAR FRIEND,

O that you might live in the Lord's sight!—If I knew the present state of your heart, I could better tell what to write to you. However, I shall set down something for your comfort.

Do not say that you are left of God, and is there no hope for you? I tell you there is mercy enough in God, merits enough in Christ, power enough in the spirit, scope enough in the promises, and room enough in heaven for you.

Do not say that you are a reprobate, and a cast-away, it is a sin to think so; every one is bound to hope that he is elected; and in virtue of that hope, to strive to make his calling and election sure. "The Lord is good to them that wait for him, *Lam.* iii. 25." There may be doubts and fears, but we must not cherish them. We must not question God's ability to save; for he can do all things; nor must we question his willingness to save; for he hath sent his own Son into the world to save us. Say to thyself, He hath made me willing to be saved, and is he not willing to save me? Alas! my tender mercies are cruelties in respect of his compassions! We cannot be so willing to confess sin, as he is to pardon it. We cannot desire to be saved, so much as he delights to save. None ever trusted him, but they found him a good God.

Therefore, my dear friend, have honourable thoughts of God. Though he should seem to hide himself from thee for a moment, yet lift up thy heart to him, and *wait for him*; in his own time he will make himself *known unto you*; he will be your own God, for your *own dear Saviour's* sake.

Perhaps you sit in darkness; but the Lord will be your light. Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart: and it will spring up. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruits of the earth. Be patient then and wait for God in the use of all his means, and the good hour will come.

Perhaps you find a coldness and deadness of heart, and complain that you cannot serve God with life and affection. This is a complaint of many of God's dear children. But we must do what we can, we must be reading, hearing, praying, waiting, upon God in his own way, and he will give us his quickening spirit.

The world will reproach us; but it reproached Christ before us. We must be willing to follow a suffering Saviour in a suffering way. Whatever men say against us, they must answer for it, not we. Only let our conversation be such as becometh the gospel of Christ. Let us give no occasion to his enemies to blaspheme his name. And he that suffereth so much for us, O! let him not suffer by us.

We must take our rules of living from the word, and not from the world. And the Lord give us wisdom to direct us and zeal to quicken us in his blessed way!— And to confirm our obedience and patience, let us remember that the Lord is coming, and his reward is with him: he is coming to receive us to himself that where he is, we may be also.

And as for the things of this life, the same love that provided a Saviour for thee, will provide all necessary temporal blessings for thee; thy heavenly Father, who knows what is best for thee, will chuse thine inheritance; therefore be not too careful about these things, but cast your care upon him who careth for you. Leave yourself with him, for he is love, 1 *John* iv. 8. Commit yourself, soul and body, into the hands of his infinite love.

Now the Lord of his infinite mercy put his spirit into *this dead letter*, for the quickening of your souls, and I *beseech him* to make it effectual for your eternal good.

—I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, and rest,

Your faithful friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER III.

To my dear Sister, Mrs. MARGARET HOLMES.

DEAR SISTER,

MAY these lines find you well and happy.—I joy in the thoughts, that your soul is secured in the hands of Christ, and that in this life you are as happy as content itself can make you.—Who hath the largest share of external comforts, but he who believes this world is vanity? Indeed the surest experience of the world's emptiness ariseth from a taste of Christ's fulness. Though there be nothing but disappointments in the world to them that make it their idol, yet it will be slavishly pursued and craved by them, because they know no better things; for the infatuated idolater hath not the sense to say within himself, is there not a lie in my right hand?

O blessed be God, who hath engaged your heart for himself; in the strength of Christ follow on to know him. How should the way of spiritual thrift be valued and improved by those who are taught of God, where their main and eternal interest lies? Where every superadded degree of favour in religion doth at once increase the stock in the heart, and the bank that is laid up in heaven. 'Tis a provision of spikenard, and precious ointment, against our funeral,—Let us call those our golden hours that are spent with God.

I should now at large commend to you that excellent duty of self-examination, but that it hath been effectually *pressed* upon you by a dear saint now in heaven. Nor *have I cause* to doubt, but as her memory, so her counsels *are inviolably* preserved in the most inward rooms

of your heart.—Accept the hearty respects of me, and mine—most ardently desiring for you all the blessings that were purchased by the most valuable blood of the Son of God, I remain in him,

Dear Sister,
Your most affectionate brother,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER IV.

To the same.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I preserve carefully my ancient respects.—Though I have been long silent, I am your orator before the highest throne, and do earnestly desire, that you may grow in the faith of Jesus, and in lively communion with him, which is the most comfortable thing in the world.—Alas! we are less than nothing, worse than nothing. Christ is all—May he be so to us!—Let us glorify him more by relying upon his satisfaction and merits, for all that we can do or suffer cannot atone for the least of our sins.—'Tis the self-emptied heart, and beggar's hand that must receive this infinite gift of God—The woman of Canaan is our pattern.—"True, Lord, I am no better than a "dog, but there are crumbs for dogs. I am as bad as "sin can make me, and deserve to be as miserable as hell "can make me; but, Lord, I am not so bad as thou art "good: I am not so miserable as thou art merciful."—

O, my dear sister, I desire that you may now live by faith, and breathe by prayer; that you may finally dwell above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.—The Lord spiritualize our souls, and quicken us according to his loving kindness.—We long to see you.——Farewell in Christ,

Your affectionate Brother,
JOHN MASON.

LETTER V.

To the same.

My Dear Sister,

You are dearly remembered by us; though we seldom converse personally, or by letters, our hearty prayers are for you at the throne of grace. I hope we shall meet together before the throne of glory. I hope I need not suggest the arguments of comfort to you, who know what it is to enjoy the presence of God on earth, and are therefore prepared to enjoy the presence of Christ in heaven.—Doubtless the Lord is our father; though our earthly parents be ignorant of us. I commend you to him thro' Christ—Let us hope in the Lord, who is Almighty and most merciful.—The Lord abound in his mercy to you! May he be a sun to direct you, a shield to protect you, a portion to sustain you, and a God to save you!

O, that we may hear the rod! which saith—Sin no more; get an interest in Christ; prize time, and prepare to meet your God; that we may inwardly hear the voice of the rod, whilst we outwardly feel the smart of it!—I beseech the Lord to prosper you every way; to watch over you; and to rejoice over you, to do you good; to sweeten your life with his love, and to fit you for his whole pleasure.—No more, but all hearty respects to you, and that I am,

Yours, in our dearest Redeemer,

John Mason.

LETTER VI.

To Mrs. ELIZABETH GLOVER.

My dear friend in Christ,

How hard a thing is it to exercise faith when we have most need of it: And how sad a thing is it, that when we have most need of the Lord's presence and help, we should then especially grieve him with our doubts and distrusts? However, we have this to comfort us, that where the Lord seeth faith in sincerity, he will pardon its infirmity.—But O! when shall we believe against sense, and hope against hope? When shall we give all glory to God by grounding upon his word, when we want present experience and feeling?—saying,

The glory of my glory still shall be
To give all glory and myself to thee.

When shall we attain to that excellent frame of believing, which the church was in, *Mich.* vii. 8, 9. "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I "shall arise; when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be "a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the "Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he "plead my cause, and execute judgment for me. He "will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold "his righteousness!"

But though we have not attained so far, let us bless God for any measure of faith, one grain whereof excelleth all the riches in the world.—And let us take heed of falling into sin. To lie under the hidings of God's face is a great affliction; but to lie under a sense of his displeasure is a greater. There is no evil so great as *sin. Let us flee* from error and temptation; avoid ill *company, which* will either taint us, or grieve us; b

jealous over your own spirit; hate presumption and carelessness, and be much in humble prayer, and holy fear.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER VII.

To the same.

My dear Friend in our dearest Lord Jesus.

THE Lord hath said, I will never fail you nor forsake you. He will not turn away from doing you good; but he will put his fear into your inward parts, that you shall never depart from him.—Having these promises, let us stand fast, holding faith and a good conscience.—Let us allow God to be infinitely wiser than ourselves, and maintain honourable thoughts of his Majesty and mercy; for as is his Majesty, so is his mercy; Let us bow to his sovereignty, and receive his grace. There are crumbs for dogs; gifts for rebels; compassion for sinners—The Lord increase our hope, encourage our faith, and enflame our love, and perfect that which concerns us!—As we have had joint communion with our good God on earth, I trust it shall be perfected in glory. —To everlasting glory is my dear sister Wyat and my dear brother Peter Holmes lately gone. The Lord, who (I trust) had fitted them for himself, fit us also!—O! blessed be God, for good hope through grace!—Pray for me that I may stand fast in the Lord.—With mine and my wife's kind respects to you, and commending you to infinite and eternal mercy in Christ, I rest in him,

Your faithful
and affectionate friend,
JOHN MASON.

Postcript.

Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, &c.

Trust in the Lord and do good.

Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.

Surely there is an end, and thine expectation shall not be cut off.

It is but a little while and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

LETTER VIII.

Dear Friend in Christ,

I LONG to hear of the state of your soul. O lay hold upon the Lord Jesus Christ, by a true and lively faith. He is an able, willing, only Saviour; the soul's resting place, the soul's dwelling place, the soul's hiding place; O that you may be hid in him now, that you may be found in him at last. We need him infinitely. We are, like Peter, sinking into the water: Save Lord, or we perish! Christ, or hell, must be our portion for ever. Christ is our only ark, to save us from perishing. Every soul will be uncased, ere it be long; and then it will appear whether they ever seriously applied themselves to Christ.—There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Nothing but condemnation to them that are out of him. Faith makes Christ ours. This consists in self-denial, and self-resignation. We must see our sins so far as to abhor ourselves; abhor ourselves so far as to deny ourselves; deny ourselves so far as to resign ourselves up into the saving arms of an only Saviour. They that do this, are pardoned, sanctified, saved for ever.

Now let me entreat you to ask your own heart some *questions.*

1. Hath sin been laid to my heart? hath it been my greatest burden?

2. Have I confessed my particular sins, and the sinfulness of my nature, with sorrow?

3. Have I been forced to make my appeal to Christ, knowing that I am lost for ever, unless he freely save me? Have I cried for a Christ, as a condemned man for a pardon?

4. Do I believe he is able and willing to save me? Do I believe that he that spread his arms on the cross to die for me, spreads his arms now in the gospel, and in heaven to save me? Have I pleaded his promises? O what a precious promise is that, *John* vi. 37. *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out!*

5. Have I had joy and peace in believing? Hath Christ, relied on, calmed, and quieted my poor troubled afflicted soul?

6. Do I love Christ, more than riches, honours, pleasures? Do I love all his ordinances? Do I love all his saints?

7. Do I hate sin in itself? Do I hate sin in myself? Do I hate every sin? every false way?

8. Do I unfeignedly, entirely yield up myself to the service of my Saviour?

If your heart answers to these questions, happy, happy are you, that ever you were born.

O my friends, I commend you to Christ. The Lord follow you with the motions of his spirit; that you may follow him with continual supplications in the spirit!—That, of the fulness of Christ, you may receive grace for grace. The peace of God, and the God of peace be with you. With mine and my sister's love, desiring your prayers, I rest,

Your affectionate friend in Christ,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER IX.

My dearly beloved friends in Christ.

I rejoice in God who hath called you into the fellowship of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; and into that grace, wherein you stand. Let us remember that we are, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. We might have been cast into hell long ago. Were we not provoking sinners? O how did the Lord call upon us and we regarded him not!—But did the Lord stand and knock, and call till he made us answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servants hear? Did he give us ears to hear? Would he not let us alone, till he had won our hearts?—O blessed be his name! We might have been blasphemers, persecutors, haters and despisers of that which is good, at this day. We might have counted the life of religion madness; praying, and professing of religion, fancy and folly. We might have been left to ourselves; all our hope might have been in this life; all our comfort in this world, all our confidence in creatures; and all our heaven upon earth: hath the Lord caused us to know better things? O let us admire his free grace, now and for ever!

My friends, consider how great things the Lord hath done for you. Call to mind your former experiences, and live as those whom the Lord hath redeemed by his blood. Now you must look upon yourselves as the Lord Christ's, and not your own. Consider *from* what you are called, and *to* what you are called.

Would you live holy, observe these rules.

1. Live in the eye of God. 2. Observe the example of Christ. 3. Consider the fruit and end of things. *The fruit of sin* is shame and sorrow. Sin is a viper *in the end:* but the fruit of righteousness is peace; ho-

liness is eternal life, in the end. 4. Bind the commandments upon your hearts. 5. Shun the appearances, and the least beginnings of sin. 6. Be frequent and fervent in secret prayer.

My friends, *Would you live comfortably, take these directions.*

1. Live not so much upon the comforts of God, as upon the God of comforts. Be afraid of unbelief; that is a great sin. Do not greaten your sins above God's saving power. Believe in the word firmly and constantly. Trust perfectly to the grace and mercy of God in Christ. "I will trust in the mercy of God (saith "David) for ever and ever," Psal. iii. 8. 2. Beware of sin, especially of wilful sin; that will bring a cloud, and make a breach between God and your soul. 3. Do not mind earthly things." O take heed of unlawful affections; of an unlawful carriage of the heart, about lawful things. 4. Examine the ways of your heart daily: Search yourselves. "What sin have I com- "mitted? What duty have I omitted this day?" Every night look back upon the thoughts and affections, and speeches of the day past. Confess your failings over the head of the Scape-goat. This is another necessary means to keep your peace with God, and to walk comfortably before him: and I pray observe it. 5. Examine your heart farther, and consider the gracious actings and workings of God's blessed spirit within you; what good thoughts, what good desires, aims, resolutions, God hath put into you. Consider what out-goings of your heart, after God, there have been; what incomes and influences of his grace. Daily examine your hearts for these things, and give God the glory of all the gracious workings of his spirit in your soul. 6. If you would walk comfortably with God, mind not what is forged, but what is written. Heed *not every fancy* the devil may dart into you, (for then *you lie at the* mercy of your enemy,) but keep close to *the written* word of God. "Thus it is written," said

our Saviour to Satan the tempter.—So much for comfortable walking.

Dear friends, *would you walk peaceably and charitably, take these rules.*

1. Remember God hath called you to peace. 2. Remember when Christ was reviled, *he reviled not again.* 3. If others neglect their duty to you, yet do not you neglect your duty to God, nor to them. Let not another's sin cause you to sin: to render railing for railing is to return sin for sin. 4. You must shew your love to God, whom you have not seen, by your love to your brother, whom you see daily. Shew your piety by your charity. 5. Consider that an unbridled tongue is a sign of an unsanctified heart. They that have not a dram of grace to tame their tongues, shall one day want a drop of water to cool their tongues. 6. Do good to others. If they do not thank you for it. The less reward you have on earth, the greater shall your reward be in heaven: As the less wages the servant takes up within his year, the more comes in at the year's end.

Dear friends, *would you be constant in good ways and purposes, take these directions.*

1. Remember you have engaged yourselves to God, and therefore you must keep yourselves from idols. You have given up your names to God, and you must give up your hearts to God. You have made a covenant with God by sacraments. If Satan or the world are suiters for your hearts, tell them, "You are already disposed of; "you are pre-engaged to God; you have "chosen your God, and you must not think of changing "him." 2. Consider whither would you go from Christ? Where do you think to find such another God as your God; such another friend as Jesus Christ? 3. Remember, if it be good to draw near to God, it is better to draw nearer to him: still the nearer the better. *One may see an end of an earthly perfection; but there is no end of the perfection of Jesus Christ.* 4. Be down-

right for God; and you shall find soul-heartening comfort in God, that shall keep you close to God. 5. Walk humbly with God; that is the way to walk closely with God. If a christian is humble, he is a christian indeed: God will not suffer such an one to be tempted above his strength. 6. Let not opinions swim in your heads; that will make you fall: But let the great things of religion sink into your hearts, and that will make you stand. Be content, yea, willing to suffer for Christ; who did so contentedly and willingly suffer for you. And if you suffer with him, you shall be glorified together.

Now, *my dear friends*, the Lord be with you all! I beseech him to strengthen, stablish, confirm, and settle you; and preserve you all to his holy and everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In whom I am

Your faithful friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER X.

My dear Christian Friend, and heartily beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT a good God have we! that remembers us in our low estate, thinks upon us when we are poor and needy, and is nearest to us when we need him most! He is a sun to comfort us, a shield to protect us; he gives us glory, he gives us himself. O what a good God have we!—Why hath he chosen us! We did not choose him, but he hath chosen us. He hath loved us first, and hath loved us freely. "Behold what manner "of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we "should be called the children of God!" Is not his love *sweeter than* wine? Is it not better than life? Does it *not sweeten* a sick-bed? Does it not sweeten the *thoughts of* death? When the love of God is shed

abroad in the heart, then the blessed soul cries, "Welcome death, welcome judgment, welcome eternity: "Come, sweet Lord Jesus, come quickly."

I rejoice to hear of your recovery. And I rejoice in the thoughts of that comfortable entertainment your Saviour gave you in the time of your sickness. When the apostle Peter was upon the water, he said, "Lord, "bid me come to thee." And so many of Christ's friends have desired him to call them. And did you run to embrace Christ? Did you rejoice in the thoughts of his coming? and long "to depart, that you might "be with him," which is best of all? O! Blessed be God for the savour of his sweet ointments, which drew out your soul after him. Blessed be God for his Almighty spirit, which made you so eagerly and joyfully desirous of the coming of Jesus Christ. But now you must wait for Christ, as the people by the sea side, *Luke* viii. 40. He will certainly come. He saith, "Behold I come quickly." It is but yet "a little while, and he "that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." You must wait for him, and watch for him. Trim your lamp, and when you hear the joyful sound, "Behold your "bridegroom cometh," you may be ready; and the bride-chamber door may stand open for you.—A good martyr in Scotland, going to suffer for Christ, said to his wife, *I will not bid you good night, for we shall meet at supper.* It is not long ere all God's people shall be gathered together to him, and shall be for ever with him.

Remember my kind love to all my dear friends with you, and near you, as duly as if I named them one by one. Mine and my wife's love to you. Let us continue to pray for one another. The Lord be with your spirit. I remain

Your assured friend in the Lord,

JOHN MASON.

Water-Stratford, March 8, 1676.

LETTER XI.

My dear Friend in Christ,

THE providence of the Lord extends itself to every thing; but there is a special Providence over the children of God, 1 *Tim.* iv. 10. The providences of God to the children of God are *purchased* providences, *sanctified* providences, *soul* providences: They are ordinances to them, instruments of good to their souls. Again, the providences of God to his children are the fruits and answers of prayer. Again, the providences of the Lord steer the children of God heaven-wards. Again, the providences of God combine and join their forces for the good of every sincere, single-hearted believer, *Rom.* viii. 28. *My friend*, this, I trust, is your happiness, that you are under the eye and conduct, and tuition of a fatherly and special Providence. Let us answer the call of Providence: which is, to watch, pray, and believe; and let us expect *good* things from a *good* God, and *great* things from a *great* God, through our faithful and dear Mediator, "who ever lives to make "intercession for us."—I suppose you may have heard, that our friend *Mary Tomkins* is gone to her eternal rest: She died triumphantly. "O! (said she upon her "death bed) What things have I seen?" *Ann Kemp* asked her, "Hath the Lord given you a glimpse of "heaven?"—"I cannot tell (said *Mary*) whether it be "heaven or not; but joys, joys, such things as never "mortal eye beheld! I have fought the good fight."—And so she went on in heavenly expressions. O! what cause have we to bless the Lord, that she who was afflicted and tossed with so many temptations in her lifetime, found joy and comfort in a dying hour! the Lord *was nearest* to her when she needed him most. My wife *remains as formerly*; I hope (through the goodness of *God) not* worse. I desire the continuance of your

prayers for us. The Lord be with your spirit. No more, but our love. In haste, I rest

Your affectionate, faithful
Friend in Christ,
JOHN MASON.

LETTER XII.

Dear friend,

Though I am but a weak interpreter of the scriptures, and especially of those hard places which are liable to so many different translations and expositions, as that is *Psal.* xi. 3. yet that I may not be thought to slight your request, whose profit I am bound to seek, I will tell you what seems to me to be the true sense of that text. Not that David here doubted of God's word as if it were not a sufficient foundation for him to build upon; (for in this psalm we find him very much believing, and confident in his God from the beginning to the end:) I think rather, this was part of the speech of his carnal counsellors, who had bid him "fly as a bird to his "mountain," in the first verse; and they gave this reason for it in the second verse, "For lo, (say they) the "wicked bend their bow," &c. But he scorns their carnal counsel in that word, "In the Lord put I my trust." But they continue their speech in the third verse: "If "the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous "do?" As if they had said, "The forests, mountains and caves are your strongest holds: keep to "those foundations; hold you there, or you will perish, though your cause be never so righteous." Holy David disdains their carnal advice, as you may read in the next verse. "There is a God in heaven "that takes notice how things are carried in the world; "that will favour the righteous (though he try them "*for a while*;) but he will utterly destroy the wicked "*and shew* them no mercy." Which is the meaning

of the fourth verse, and of those that follow, to the end of the psalm. And this is the most natural sense, which upon serious consideration, I can fix upon this portion of scripture. Not but that I am willing to be informed by any one, of a better interpretation. *My dear friend*, It pities me to read your complaints. The good Lord (if it be his will) restore you the joy of his salvation. Self-abasing, and constant waiting upon God in his own blessed ways, are approved means to recover lost comfort. My prayers are, and shall be for you. With mine and my wife's hearty love to you, and all our christian friends with you, or near you, I rest

Your assured friend,

JOHN MASON.

Water-Stratford, August 10, 1676.

LETTER XIII.

My dear friend,

Christ be your soul's comfort!—Though he hath taken away your husband, "the desire of your eyes, "with a stroke," he hath promised, that "his loving "kindness he will not take away." The world is full of changes, but our God is unchangeable. Common mercies are sweet mercies, but covenant mercies are sure mercies. Christ is faithful: He ever lives; and (saith he) "because I live ye shall live also."

The Lord support and comfort your heart under this heavy hand of his which he hath laid upon you. O! that it may bring your soul nearer to God, and to Jesus Christ. O! that *that* Providence which hath wrought death in your husband, may work life in your heart. Hate sin; overcome the world; love Christ; mind heaven and heavenly things, my dear christian friend.

I have great hopes that your soul is safe, however it *may please* the Lord to deal with your body and family. *Submit* yourself cheerfully to his will and pleasure;

and say, "Lord, here I am, here is my family; do "with me what shall seem good in thine eyes."—The Lord be gracious to you. The Lord be gracious to *Haversham*. The Lord awaken the hearts of the people. O that they might repent quickly! because wrath is gone out from the Lord. The Lord stay his hand if it be his will. The Lord Jesus stand between the living and the dead. The Lord bless his word and rod to yourself and others. The Lord dwell, and rule, and walk in the midst of you. O keep close to God! he will never fail you, nor forsake you.

My prayers are for you. My kind respects to yourself, and all our christian friends. My wife sends her love to you. The Lord be with your spirit.

I remain

Your loving friend in the Lord,

JOHN MASON.

Stratford, Sept. 25.

LETTER XIV.

My endeared friend,

It is the duty of every true Christian to give God the glory of his grace. "We can never bless God enough "for his patience, that hath kept us so long out of hell; "nor for his mercy, that so earnestly invites us to hea-"ven." Is it nothing, that the Lord is continually following us with terms of peace, and tenders of mercy, and beseeching us to be reconciled?—Say not in your heart, "I have nothing of Christ in me," because you have not attained to such perfection and assurances as you desire. It was the saying of a good christian, "I "bless God for a good thought." Bless God for any token of his love; any portion of his spirit. Thou canst not say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" but canst thou not say, "They are confessed; they are confessed over "the head of the Scape-goat?" Dost thou hear?

confess thy sins unto God, with all their aggravations? O! it is a great mercy.—Thou canst not say, "Thou "hast an interest in Christ;" but hath not Christ an interest in thee? Hath he not won thine heart and affections? O! it is a great mercy.—Thou sayest possibly, "I am not worthy to be called a child of God." But doth not God receive and treat thee as a father? The prodigal (*Luke* xv.) acknowledged, "He was not "worthy to be called a son;" but yet his father received him.—Again, it may be "Thou complainest of sin;" but is it with thee as it was formerly? Shouldst thou not bless God for some amendment? If a sick man be any thing better in his health (though he still be very bad, yet) he will tell his friends, "He is somewhat bet-"ter than he was;" and he blesses God for it. Besides, though sin dwells in thee, yet, perhaps, it is the grief of thy soul: Thou art its *captive*, not its *convert*. As sin is against thy soul, so is not thy soul against sin? If it be thy *grief*, it shall not be thy *ruin*.

Again, it may be "Thine heart is troubled in an hour "of temptation;" but hast thou not sometimes enjoyed sweet peace with God? Were not thine earthly delights vain? Canst thou not say now, *O quam suave est istis suavitatibus carere?* "One quarter of an hour's com-"munion with God is worth all the delights in the "world?" Canst thou not call to mind some of God's former loving kindnesses? Hast thou not sometimes tasted and seen how good the Lord is?—What a mercy is that!—Again, "Thou art not assured of heaven, "and thou wantest an assurance thereof." But thou hast such hopes of heaven as thou wouldst not exchange for all the kingdoms of the world; and shouldst thou not bless God for that, which is more to thee than all the world?—Again, "Thou sinnest through mistake "or passion." But canst thou find in thine heart to sin against God? "He that is born of God cannot sin;" *that is*, "He cannot find in his heart to sin," because *he is born of God*.—Again, it may be "Thou com-"*plainest of* a dead heart." But is there not some life

in thee? *Deadness* stands in opposition to *liveliness* as well as *life*. If thou art dead, that is, "not lively," yet bless God that thou art not quite "dead in tres-"passes and sins."—Again, it may be, "Thou com-"plainest of a hard heart." But thy heart is not so hard, but it feels its hardness. Did Pharoah complain of the plague of a hard heart? he felt it not, he was all stone. But if thy heart feels its hardness, it is a sign there is something of flesh. Bless God for that covenant-mercy "a heart of flesh."—Again, it may be "The Lord tar-"rieth or hideth himself from thee." But art thou not willing to wait upon him, and to wait for him? Dost thou wait under his table for crumbs? Dost thou wait at his gate for mercy? Well, "The Lord is good to "them that wait for him," *Lam.* iii. 25.—Again, it may be thou complainest "Thou art often out of frame "or uneven temper; sometimes praying, sometimes "sinning," &c. But though thou art not always the same, yet God is, and Jesus Christ is; and therefore it is that "we are not consumed."—Again, it may be thou thinkest "Thou shalt never be able to suffer for "Christ: thy weak nature shrinks and trembles at the "thoughts of it; thou art afraid thou shalt rather de-"ny thy Saviour, than thy name, thy liberty, or thy "life." It is true, if thou shouldst be left to thyself, it would be so; but "God is faithful, and he will not "suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able to "bear." He will not send thee into a wood to fell an oak with a penknife. When he calls thee to the work thou never didst, he will give thee the strength thou never hadst.—Again, it may be, "Thou fearest thou "shalt fall away, and shall never hold out to the end." But doth not this fear of thine rather *secure* thee than *betray* thee? Does it not quicken thee to duty, to watch and pray, &c.? It is a mercy if it be such a *fear* and *trembling* as thou art "working out thy salvation by." But "Wherefore dost thou doubt?" Hath God ever *failed thee at thy need*? When the disciples began to *be concerned* about bread, saith our Saviour, "Do ye

"not remember how many baskets full ye took up at "such a time? And how many at such a time? Are "your hearts still hardened?" So say I, remember how God hath comforted you at such a time, or such a time, and "be not faithless, but believe."—The Lord inspire your heart with courage and comfort, that you may persevere in his good ways unto the end. The Lord be your keeper, your guide, your portion for ever.

I shall be glad to hear how it fares with you. I hope we are not unmindful of one another, though there had been an interruption of epistolatory converse. I suppose you might not receive my last letter. With mine, my wife's, Mrs. W——'s, your brother's and Martha's hearty loves and respects, and all good wishes, I rest

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER XV.

My affectionate and dear friend,

You oblige us by your good and kind letters, and the news you send us. I hope you have that special gift of God, *faith*. Now is a time to exercise it. Now God's wrath seems to be kindled a little against the nation, "Blessed are all those that put their trust in him."

O let us lay up for ourselves a treasure in heaven! O that we were wise to make provision for our souls, whilst we enjoy our lives! That when our lives shall be lost, our souls may be safe, and that for ever.—What a mercy it is that we have a God to go to? and the name of Christ to go to him in? *Antichrist* is cruel, but *Christ* is merciful. Let our souls fall into the arms of *Christ*, though our lives should fall into the hands of *Antichrist*. O that "our spirits may be saved in the "*day of the* Lord Jesus!" and that we may meet at *last in heaven*!—O! pray, pray that he would bless,

guide, preserve, and keep you and me, us and ours, by the Holy Ghost, that we may never fail; but "be faithful unto death, that we may receive a crown of life."

The Lord manifest himself unto you in the riches of his love; and bless you abundantly with all heavenly favours! Be encouraged to persevere in well-doing, for "you shall reap if you faint not." O let us live by faith till we shall live by sight. Let us walk with God till he shall take us.—Mine and my wife's love to you. Pray for her and me. The Lord watch over your spirit; and charge his providence with you, and command all things to work together for your good. I remain

Your faithful friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER XVI.

To Mr. JOHN MEAD.

Dear friend,

The Lord be with you! The Lord shine upon you in the face of Christ.—O seek the face and favour of God. He that findeth Christ, findeth life; he findeth the sweetest of all blessings; he findeth the pearl of great price. Christ is the "Lamb of God that taketh away "the sin of the world." Sin will *find us out* if Christ do not hide us. But he spreads his wing, and calls us to come under it. The Lord bring you under the wing of Christ! under covenant-protection, *my dear friend*, that your "soul may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Beg not only pardon, but purity of heart. Desire a *new nature*, that you may serve the Lord in *newness of life*. *Watch and pray* against sin; and every night examine yourself how you have spent the day. Bless the *Lord for what* good he hath enabled you to do; and *confess, and* be humbled, if you have thought, or spoke

or done any evil. Walk as in the sight of God; do all things as in his presence, who is our Judge.

I commend you to the infinite love of God, and rest

Your loving friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER XVII.

To the same.

Dear friend,

I desire your happiness in all respects, and that that God who gives you health and strength for your earthly calling, may enable you for the duties of your heavenly calling; and that whilst your hand is in the world, your heart may be in heaven.

I hope you do conscientiously observe God's sabbaths, and delight in his ordinances; and that you experience the sweetness of communion with God, and of his service, which is perfect freedom. I desire that you may continue in well-doing, that you may be "faithful to the "death, that you may receive a crown of life. To keep "a conscience void of offence," must be your daily exercise, and it shall be your daily comfort.

I hope you visit the throne of grace daily, and find prayer to be your chief delight, and the best of your fare. Confess what you find amiss in yourself. Beg pardon and sanctification. Endeavour to walk closely with God.—There is nothing like close communion, and close walking with God.—I should be glad to hear of your soul's prosperity. Though I seldom write to you you are not out of my heart, nor out of my prayers. My service to your good brother *William*, of whose recovery I long to hear, and to your brother *Samuel*, to whom *I thought to* write, but at present want opportunity.—*The Lord Jesus* be with you. In him I am

Your faithful friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER XVIII.

A Letter wrote by the Reverend Mr. John Mason, to Mr. Anthony Holmes, on the death of his beloved sister, Mrs. Hannah Wyat.

There is no necessity, my dear brother, that we should like Niobe, weep ourselves into marble, for the loss of our friends. Some have admired the old custom of the *Thracians*, who celebrated their nativities with mournings, but their funerals with feasts of joy. And for us, who, by the light of the gospel, have an insight into, and a prospect of heaven; for us, I say, to mourn beyond measure for the loss of our friends, is certainly very unbecoming: especially for such as did not lie grovelling on the earth, void of heavenly things: but, on the contrary, so breathed piety, and relished heaven, that they were even ready to expire with the earnestness of their desires, and the ardency of their prayers.

And such a one was our dearest sister, who was so enamoured with the better things of the other world, that nothing below could attract her desires.—It is not the sharpness of her wit, the comeliness of her person, the sweetness of her disposition, nor the rest of those moral virtues, which I so much admired in her; but it is her wondrous piety, her lively faith in her Jesus, (whom she loved, worshipped, nay, was almost ready to die for love of,) that I would praise.

She told me a little before her death "I love you all dearly, but my Jesus" (which word she expressed with a wonderful emphasis) "is infinitely dearer than you all." She could have had patience to have lived, but to die was her great desire: well knowing, that would be a passage to the full and eternal fruition of her *much-desired Jesus.* None ever feared death more than she *desired it:* Nay, so vehement was her rejoicing at the

hopes of her approaching change, that I could not but be extremely affected with it, and a partaker of it too. When I saw her just on the confines of the heavenly kingdom, as it were on the threshold of a blessed eternity, I was almost overwhelmed with the excess of my joy.

But whither is she gone? In what station is our sister (no longer in the flesh but in the Lord) now placed? She is not a shadow but a star; no longer a widow but married to her Lord, to whom she was betrothed. This she expressed a little before her death. When she received a most affectionate letter from a certain friend, (who was almost dead to hear of her illness, and earnestly desired her health,) I asked her sentiments of the letter. Her answer was, "I am obliged to any "one who wishes me health, or any good thing; but O! "my Jesus, my Jesus!" protesting then, that she longed for nothing more than to enjoy her beloved Jesus.

And the blessed time is come. Now she rejoices in her Jesus, and shall do so to eternal ages. A blessed sabbath hath shined on her, which shall never be darkened with an evening.

This puts me in mind of another thing. It was on the Lord's day that our beloved sister departed from us to her lord. As Lord Chief Justice Hales died on Christmas day, which he used to observe with great solemnity; so that day blessed this holy woman, which she was wont to observe with admirable strictness. She preferred one sabbath before a thousand week-days. I will speak a great word; I verily believe I never took more pains to make a sermon, than she did to apply it to her heart; and as in a cabinet to treasure it in her breast.

This her wonderful piety I could not but admire whilst she lived; and though she be dead, the remembrance of that dies not. This I designed to have spread *abroad, that* others might be moved with a holy emulation *of so* pious an example. Yet she (such was her *modesty)* would by no means permit it to be done in

the pulpit. For after I had heard that she had forbid all manner of public panegyrics, I desired that she would, at least, give me leave to say something of her; but her humility overcame my importunity. But, let not so splendid an example ever slide out of our breasts! Let this so excellent and glorious a specimen of piety, which we have seen in her, live, increase, and flourish among us.

As to what pertains to you, (my dear brother,) it must needs be grievous to bear the loss of so loving and so beloved a woman. Even in her last and greatest extremity, her affection for you cooled not at all. In this manner she cried out, "Oh, my dear *Anthony!* O! how I love that brother." But there is no need of arguments to prove this, which was so evident through the whole course of her life. She loved you as a brother, took care of you as a mother; nay, and long suplied the place of a mother to you.

But wherefore do I write this? Not to increase your grief, but for the sake of your precious soul. I am well assured how much she loved it. How many were her desires, cares, and solicitudes, her prayers and tears upon your soul's account. She wished you all happiness as to your bodily health, in your marriage, in your trade, in all your affairs; but her greatest care was for your soul. Love yourself as she loved you. Endeavour, with all your strength, to imitate and follow her.

She had a serious mind, and a heavenly breast. She was taken up with divine things. Her heart was in heaven, while her business confined her to earth. She was frugal, and yet liberal. In her temper, meekness was joined with fortitude. In her practice, she was industrious, but not covetous; ingenuous, but not malapert; comely, and yet humble at home. She had great reverence for the higher powers, and gave great deference to the dignities of the church. Against our superiors she esteemed it a crime even to whisper; yet made herself *equal even to her inferiors.* How many are the poor, *and sick, and maimed,* that she hath helped? So that

she might truly have been termed a deaconess of the English church. She died to herself, that she might live to others. She was constant in prayer: a strict observer of the sabbath. She loved the word of God, and reverenced his image in his saints. To those she was a constant companion, and delighted in their company, though they were by others termed *the scum of the world.* She preferred a dram of grace before the riches of both Indies; yet ceased not endeavouring after all the links of the golden chain. She lived in faith, and died in faith, and by faith she fled to Christ, as to an altar, whom she justly esteemed the beginnng and end of her salvation. And finally, hence arose her triumphs over the infernal powers, and the horrible pomp of death.——Behold her faith, my dear brother, and imitate it as far as you can.

LETTER XIX.

My very affectionate, and very dear friend,

I hope there is an indissoluble knot between us that neither silence nor distance can break in pieces; I mean, the "unity of the spirit;" which will outstand all carnal alliances, founded in blood or marriages; and all temporary confederacies, grounded upon interest or temper. Time often breaks the *last*, and death ever dissolves the *first* of these ties and communications. But spiritual friendship grows by time, and is perfected by death: it lasts and holds for ever. The time comes when there will be no friendship but spiritual friendship. When Eve awoke out of Adam's side, how was he joyed in her? "this is bone of my bone," &c. But when they had sinned he bitterly accused her at the bar of God. Such will the end be of all that *jocund friendship* of all unregenerate allies: they will *be divided* at the bar of God, and no otherwise united, *than as tares* are in the same bundle, whose nearness *does not help* to consume one another.

But, I hope, *my dear friend*, we are one spirit in Christ for ever. I hope we are met in him through grace; shall meet with him in the clouds; and shall be ever with him in heaven. In the mean time, I condemn and abhor myself, that when divine providence gave me a long wished-for opportunity of seeing your face, I was no more inward with you; and that I so foolishly lost the advantage I then had of consulting and furthering your spiritual estate.

Sorry I am, there was so little of heaven, so much of earthliness and carnality in my conversation with you. And this I write with grief and shame. How often have my bowels yearned towards your soul! that I have thought, "O that you were but near me, or by "me! O that we had but an opportunity of discoursing "together of things pertaining to the kingdom of "God!"—I had an opportunity; I say, I had an opportunity:—But it is gone, it is gone! and whether I shall ever have the like again, I know not. "The Lord forgive me;"—Though I have not been my brother's keeper, yet I will commit my brother to that God, who is able to keep him "from this present evil "world;" and from every evil work, unto life eternal. —The Lord by his spirit, breathe into you better meditations than I could have possibly suggested. I should have spoken *to* you; but yet I may speak *for* you, and you for me, to that God who is with us both at the same time; and who can bless us both out of the riches of his grace and goodness in Jesus Christ. In whom I am,

Dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

That longs for your everlasting happiness,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER XX.

Dear friend,

I thank you for your letter. I earnestly desire your proficiency and comfort in the good ways of God. A christian must be humbled but never discouraged; the first is a duty, the second is a sin: though the bare talking of the lips tends only to penury, yet talking of God, and the things of God, from the heart, is part of the christian practice, especially among those that are endued with a sense of religion. "Our words must be "savoury, seasoned with salt; tending to edification; "and such as may minister grace to the hearers."

I commend to you secret duties. "A christian is "what he is between God and his own soul." Go to God for God; go not from God without God: seek his face in Christ; endeavour for a sense of his favour, and the supply of his spirit; you have the blessed and most worthy name of Christ to speed your requests, therefore let nothing lie upon your heart to trouble you. It is not only a suffering but a sin, to let any thing lie upon our heart to trouble us, when we have a God that bids us "cast all our care upon him." God will deal familiarly with you: he will be all things to you, if you depend upon him. If your spirit flags or faints, search the cause of this untowardness and averseness, and conclude it is not well with you, *till you have* recovered a cheerful obedient frame of heart, that you can say from your soul, "Lord, whom have I in heav- "en but thee? Whom have I on earth but thee?"

Two things resolve upon by the grace of God, viz. "to judge yourself, and to judge nobody else." God requires these two things, "to be severe towards your- "*self, and* charitable towards others:" this will bring *you comfort.* Attend to the vitals and essentials of re-

ligion: they will nourish the life and power of godliness in your heart.

Three things make a christian, viz. "Repentance to-"wards God; faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and "sincere and universal obedience." Mind these three things, and the God of peace shall be with you. Assure yourself, "there is such a thing as religion in the "world, though some deride it, and others falsely pre-"tend to it:" there is such a thing as communion with God: seek comfort in God through Christ; there it is to be found; rest not till you have found it, and then your soul will say, "this is that I would have; this "satisfies and refreshes." If a man hath his chest full of treasure, what cares he though he be called a poor man? he hugs himself, and saith, *Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo.* So if a man be judged a hypocrite, it matters not, so long as he hath the evidence of his sincerity in his bosom; a testimony within that he "hath "pleased God." In a great house there are grooms and scullions, yet we say, "it is not their house," it is such a nobleman's house, he owns it; so there is not a christian in the world but had vile slaves lodging within him, but Christ is "Lord of the house." Corruption rebelled, but grace reigns: there are two houses, two parties, Christ's side and nature's; and a conflict between them. If it were not so, if it were not for this inward conflict, earth would be heaven: for outward opposition would be nothing, if it were not for this inward strife. Well, but *Quod non placit, id non nocet*, "If "sin be our grief and hatred, it shall not be our ruin." Christ's side shall prevail.

I commend you my dear friend to the grace of God, which is able to illuminate your mind, to govern your spirit, and to preserve you to his everlasting kingdom.

I rest your sincere Friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER XXI.

My dear friend,

I am sensible of your love to us. You mourn with us, and rejoice with us: and I hope you pray for us, and praise for us. And therefore I must needs desire your temporal, and especially, your eternal welfare. I rejoice in the hopes of your stedfastness in Christ; blessed be God who hath preserved you, and followed you with the motions of his good spirit. The Lord carry on his work in our hearts, that we may at last meet in his kingdom. Be encouraged still to depend on God. Converse with him by faith, meditation and prayer. If any despise the good ways of God, I trust you can justify them by your own experience. God's work is wages, and "in keeping his commandments there is great "reward." Go on (my dear and faithful friend) go on in the strength of God. Follow after righteousness, holiness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Labour after farther measures of grace, and more intimate acquaintance and communion with God. "The way of the "Lord is strength to the upright." The farther a man walks in the good ways of God, the better he will find them. Let us live by faith, till we shall live by sight. Let us breathe by prayer, till we breathe out our souls into Christ's bosom. Say, we are weak (as it is most true;) our God will strengthen us. A christian cannot keep himself, but he "is kept by the power of God, "through faith unto salvation." Therefore we must commit our souls to God's keeping, and derive supplies of strength from Jesus Christ. O that we might daily "receive of his fulness, even "grace for grace!" When *Satan tempts*, or the world tempts, fly to Christ, and he *will succour*. If your heart be dead, go to Christ, and *he will quicken* it.

I commend you to Christ in my prayers; I commend Christ to you in my letters; Christ is all in all. "Because I live (saith he) ye shall "live also." Christ sweetens life, death, the grave, resurrection, heaven, and eternity; Christ sweetens all. Do you not love a man when you see *aliquid Christi*, "something of "Christ in him?" Do you not love a book when you read something of Christ in it? Are not the ordinances dear to you, because Christ is to be seen through these lattices? And do you not love christian assemblies, because Jesus Christ walks in the midst of the "golden "candlesticks?"

My dear friend, I hope you truly belong to Christ, and will one day see his face with joy. He is our priest, he is our surety, he is our advocate at the right hand of the Father. O let us prize him, and praise him to eternity. To the Lord Almighty's protection, and most gracious favour, I commit you, remaining

Your assured and faithful friend,

JOHN MASON.

LETTER XXII.

Dear friend,

Though Providence hath separated us, yet it refresheth me to think upon you, and that I am interested in your prayers, as you are in mine. Well, if we are met in Christ, we shall meet upon the bench in the great day of assize, and before a throne of glory in our heavenly Father's kingdom. In the mean while, our God is with us both whilst we are with him. In his presence is fulness of joy. It is not so much the change of place, as the presence of God, which makes heaven. *There* is heaven where God shines and manifests himself. When a soul can say, "I would not go to heaven, if it were not "to meet God there; and if I should be cast into the "*flames of hell*, I could not find in mine heart to blas-

" pheme God ;" the exercise of such a meditation will mightily help her against temptations.

Many a good soul doth not know how much she loves God ; but when she feels that affection stirring within her.—O then, she is in a new, serene, comfortable frame! Satan flies, " Perfect love casts out fear." Love God, and praise God, and all is at peace. Nay, admit the soul hath not got full assurance of her pardon, yet if she sets down this resolution—" Let God be glorified whatever " becomes of me. Let the angels praise him ; let the " saints praise him ; let the Jews and Gentiles be called " in to praise him ; and if it may please his Divine Ma- " jesty, let me poor unworthy soul please him, and be a " praise to his grace for ever and ever." If it can say this, it must be happy with it. That must needs be a happy soul that breathes forth the praises of God, ascribes all glory to God, and can sing

The glory of my glory still shall be,
To give all glory, and myself to thee.

The Lord put and keep your heart in a praising frame. O how well doth this angelical and evangelical disposition befit and become those, who of sinners are made saints ; of enemies, children ; of slaves, heirs ; of burning brands, shining stars! When we consider seriously what we have been, and what we *might* have been, nay what we *must* have been, if infinite mercy had not prevented ; (as the Lord was seen in the mount, when Isaac lay bound upon the altar, mercy came in between the knife and the sacrifice) instead of being scourged, how nobly pardoned and promoted ! raised from devils' to angels' company ; from the lowest depth to the greatest height! this (I say, if we consider it) is matter of admiration, not of expression. If we had as many tongues as we have veins or drops of blood, they could *never utter* a thousandth part of the due praises of divine *grace.* " Let us now magnify the Lord, and exalt his " *name together.*" O the height, and breadth, and depth

and length, of the Father's love! O the infinite and unsearchable riches of free grace! O the tremendous mystery, and invaluable mercy of the incarnation of the Son of God! O the stupendous humiliation and condescension of eternal glory and omnipotency! O the unparalleled love of a dying Saviour! O the sweet heavenly communion of the blessed Comforter!—Lord, what are we, or what is our father's house, that thou hast brought us hitherto! That thou shouldest make thyself glorious in our glory, who had made ourselves vile in dishonouring thy name? O, let us give him our whole souls, who hath redeemed them by his blood! For it is fit he should have the utmost of so dear a purchase. Farewell, my dearest friend in the Lord, in whom I am

Your true friend,

JOHN MASON.

A short prayer for children.

O most great and gracious God, thou art from everlasting to everlasting. No creature is worthy to come before thee; much less am I, poor sinful dust and ashes.

O Lord, I am conceived and born in sin; thou hast nourished and brought me up, but I have rebelled against thee; I have known thy will, but have not done it, and therefor deserve to be "beaten with many stripes." I have despised thy promises, and abused thy mercies. I have been unthankful for mercies received, and unfruitful under mercies enjoyed. I have sinned against so much light, against so much love, and against so much warning, that it is of thy infinite mercy that I am not consumed. I cannot answer for what I have done; I cannot bear what I have deserved.

O enter not into judgment with me! Do not punish, but pity me! Remember not what I have done, but *remember what* Christ hath suffered, and let his blood go *for mine!* I pray thee, let my sins be my grief, but not

my ruin; let them be laid to my heart, but not to my charge; thou hast found a ransom, deliver me from the pit: since Christ was crucified, let me be released; as he was afflicted and smitten, let me be "healed by his "stripes, and cured by his wounds."

What comfort can I take in any thing here below, if sin lie at the door? Lord, I beseech thee to take away my sin before thou takest away my life. Let me not, nor any that are related to me, live in sin, and die in sin, and go to the grave "with a lie in our right hand."

I humbly beseech thee, O Lord, to sprinkle my conscience with the blood of Christ, "which cleanseth from "all sin." Give me faith in that blood, and peace in the application of it to my conscience, that by these tokens for good, I may know that I am "not appointed "for wrath, but to obtain salvation by my Lord Jesus "Christ." And for his sake, grant me thy holy spirit, I beseech thee, to enlighten my mind, that I may know thee; to renew my will, that I may serve thee; and to sanctify my affections, and all the powers of my soul and body, that I may follow thee fully all the days of my life.

O Lord, defend me from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Make me good in my person, and good in my place. Let thy spirit rest in me, that I may be always doing or getting good. Help me well through this world. Use me whilst I live, and don't refuse me when I come to die. Let my life be a holy walking with thee, that my death may be a comfortable going to thee.

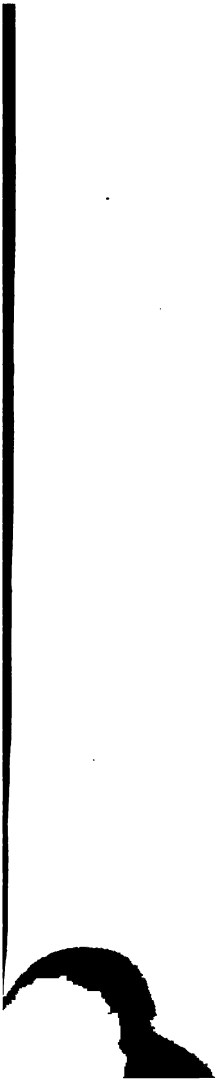
For Christ's sake, O Lord, bless all thy people, this nation, and the family I belong to. Give all true peace and holiness. Hasten the downfal of Babylon, the conversion of the Jews, and the fulness of the Gentiles.

Heavenly Father, I bless, praise, and magnify thee, for my creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all, for the Lord Jesus Christ, that unspeakable gift of thine; for the means and seasons of *grace, and for* all thy mercies. Hear me, O Lord, for *Christ's sake*, in whose name and words I further pray—

"*Our Father*, which art in heaven. Hallowed be

" thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on
" earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily
" bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our
" debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver
" us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the pow-
" er, and the glory, for ever and ever, *Amen.*"

THE END.



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